

**The Institute of Education**

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**From Students to Teachers - A Longitudinal Study of  
Occupational Socialisation of Pre-service Physical Education  
Teachers in Hong Kong**

**A Dissertation Presented by**

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I hereby declare that the work presented in this  
thesis is my own work.

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## **Abstract**

This study is concerned with a qualitative inquiry into how twenty pre-service physical education teachers, who were taking the full-time two-year teacher education programme, became occupationally socialised. The research was pursued along the theoretical lines derived from the interpretive approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, student records in reflective journals and critical incident analysis over four sequential data collection phases. For analysis, pre-service teachers were categorised into five broad groups in accordance with their entry characteristics. Emergent and recurrent themes in terms of what is classified as teacher perspectives were traced: these included pre-training dispositions, orientations, professional conceptions, socialising strategies and sense of agency. The students were found to possess a spectrum of personality types and attitudinal dispositions including defining orientations toward sports coaching, apprehensiveness, teaching affinity, pragmatic considerations, and an easy going style with cognitive and behavioural tendencies ranging from custodial to progressive and from dominant utilitarian to non-dominant liberal respectively.

Their professional conceptions of promoting learning for the pupils, bringing fun through games, controlling, maintaining discipline and seeing physical education as cathartic were revealed and submitted to in-depth analysis. The socialising strategies adopted for resolving the dissonance they experienced during the learning-to-teach process included improving their teaching skills, social adaptation and self-defensive mechanisms. While they all anticipated practical experiences to some extent, they attended to the pedagogical contents of the teacher education programme in diverse ways. Their perceptions were transformed to various degrees by the impact of socialising agents including their coaches, tutors, school supporting teachers, and the programme of activities and experiences engendered by the teacher education programme as an organic whole.

The findings of the research should provide a better understanding of the development of pre-service physical education teachers in Hong Kong especially in relation to their anticipatory and professional socialisation. The results of the study are critically considered for their potential impact. Accordingly, clear implications are drawn to facilitate the socialisation processes of the pre-service PE teachers through the physical education teacher-training programme.

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## **Chapter I**

### **The area of Inquiry**

## 1.1 Introduction

This study is an investigation of the socialisation processes of a group of pre-service physical education (PE) trainees. It looks into how twenty student teachers, enrolling in a full-time two-year teacher education programme, eventually socialised themselves to become secondary school PE teachers. The focuses are on understanding their pre-training dispositions and how their perspectives of being a PE teacher are shaped when engaging in their teacher education programme.

This chapter presents the purposes and the overall organisation of this thesis. Following the presentation of the purposes of this study, the next two sections include an explanation of the key terms employed and a presentation of the organisation of this thesis. The fourth section illustrates the rationale for adopting the occupational socialisation model for the study of pre-service teachers. The research questions and the significance of this study are included in the fifth and the sixth section. This chapter ends with a summary section drawing on key issues presented.

In the past decade, the question of “how one chooses and develops to become a teacher” was a major research agenda of many scholars (Graber 1995; Morgan, 1997; O’Bryant et al, 2000; Curtner-Smith, 1997; 2001; Wright 2001; Mantin and Collier, 2003; Chepyator-Thomson, 2003). This research direction suggests the significance of developing quality teachers. Similar concern in relation to local schools was raised by the Education Commission of Hong Kong (1992) when it stipulated the follows:

...nowadays career choices are more varied than ever before: how then can the teaching profession continue to attract and retain people of good quality?...how then should we prepare our teachers, and develop their professional skills to meet these expectations as fully as possible?”. (p.2)

In response to the questions raised by the Commission report, this requires a thorough understanding of the characteristics of teacher candidates as well as their

training development while they engaged in teacher education programme.

In Hong Kong, there are few studies concerning pre-service PE teachers. It may be due to the fact that the research development in this area in Hong Kong has stagnated when compared with some western countries like the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Australia. It was not until 1989 that the local universities in Hong Kong began to launch degree programmes in PE. The first local PE journal was published in 1995 (HKBU, 1995) and it has been the only one in circulation. This problem of lacking research in the local PE arena posed serious limitations to the planning and implementation of quality PE teacher education programmes. For a long time, the local training of PE teachers has relied on Western models rather than for the sake of catering for the local context and needs. To develop quality training programme for PE teachers and have it made relevant to our pre-service PE teachers and schools, research on understanding our pre-service PE teachers and their development while they are engaging in their teacher education programme should be essential.

## **1.2 Definitions of terms and concepts**

In presenting this study, a number of terms are being used which have to be understood in the context of Hong Kong's education system and their specific usage for this study. The definitions are clarified within the particular context of this study. The following are definitions of the key terms and concepts used:

**Pre-service teachers** is a general term used in this study to describe people admitted to the teacher education programmes. Sometimes it is used interchangeably with student teachers, prospective teachers, trainees and recruits.

The **participant** is a term used to describe the pre-service teachers involved in this

study.

**PE beginning teachers** is a term used in this study to signify the fresh PE graduates who have just obtained their qualified teacher status and are teaching in schools for their first year.

**Occupational socialisation of PE teachers** refers to the process in which PE teachers acquaint actively themselves with necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes associated with the occupation during their whole socialisation process. It is “an umbrella term” to include all kinds of socialisation that initially attract people to enter the field of PE and are later responsible for their perceptions and actions as PE teachers. Lawson (1988) suggests that “for some persons, socialisation into sports leads to socialisation via sport and can result in the choice of physical education as a career. This choice prompts the recruits to accept some parts of the professional socialisation experienced in university teacher education programme, while rejecting others” (p.267). Obviously, occupational socialisation of some PE recruits may occur in other educational venues apart from sport socialisation.

**Societal socialisation of PE teachers** refers to the process through which PE teachers in their given social system acquire the dominant rules and meanings that are so taken for granted as to be called “common sense”. This common sense influences their ways of thinking and behaving. Although PE teachers may contest and make efforts to reject such common sense during the socialisation process, the dominant societal traditions still act to contour the range of known or acceptable alternatives (Lawson, 1988).

**Professional socialisation of PE teachers** is “the process in which persons

recruited into PE. [They] acquire the knowledge, values, sensitivity, and skills endorsed by this profession” (Lawson, 1988, p.267).

**Sport socialisation** is a process in which individuals acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for sport participation as well as the meaning they derive from such experience. They are first socialised into sport through sports selection and later become involved in it. This process also involves acquisition of consumer preferences and lifestyle patterns.

**Teacher education programme** refers to the professional preparation programme for PE teachers. It is used interchangeably with physical education teacher education, teacher education course and training programme for PE teachers. In this study, it refers to the PE programme of the formal two-year full-time teacher education course offered by the Hong Kong Institute of Education and implemented by the Department of Physical Education and Sports Science for pre-service PE teachers. Upon graduation, pre-service PE teachers receive a qualified teacher status for teaching PE in secondary schools in Hong Kong.

**Field experience (FE)** is used throughout this paper to describe the practical experiences in schools that pre-service PE teachers learn the work of PE teachers. The term is used interchangeably with teaching practice, teaching experience in schools and socialisation in field setting. Two FEs titled “the supported teaching practice” and “the teaching practice” are arranged for pre-service PE teachers to practise their teaching in schools during their two-year teacher education programme in the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

**Tutors** refer to the lecturing staff of the Department of Physical Education and

Sports Science responsible for the implementation of the professional preparation programme for pre-service PE teachers. The term is used interchangeably with “lecturers”.

**Supporting teachers** refer to regular PE teachers in the FE schools. They are invited to provide guidance for pre-service PE teachers during the first school experience. It is used interchangeably with the terms, co-operating teachers in the US and mentors in the UK. Supporting teachers are expected to allow pre-service PE teachers observe some of their lessons. They need to discuss with the pre-service PE teachers concerning their performance, progress and problems on a regular basis.

### **1.3 Overall organisation of the thesis**

This thesis comprises three parts with nine chapters. The first part containing the first three chapters, provides an explanation of the significance, the context and approaches adopted for the study. The second part, chapter four to chapter seven, illustrates the data collection and analysis of the different phases of the study. The phases include the pre-training, professional orientation, the first school experience and the professional re-orientation. The third part, consisting of the last two chapters, provides a discussion on the overall findings and the implications of this study as well as a further analysis of the curriculum policy for a well-formulated PE teacher education programme. The following is a detailed description of each chapter:

Chapter I attempts to clarify the aims, scope and significance of the study. It also provides an explanation for the adoption of occupational socialisation research in PE in this study.

Chapter II includes two components. The first component discusses the development of PE teacher education in Hong Kong. Three significant periods are identified chronologically to illustrate the distinct socio-historical and political factors that have shaped the curriculum of PE teacher education. The second component concerns a review of literature on the studies of pre-service PE teachers and their occupational socialisation processes. It serves as a contextual platform for launching the study of how pre-service PE teachers learn to become PE teachers.

Chapter III explains the major methodological framework of the whole project. It deals with the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying this study. A detailed explanation of the research methodology, strategies and techniques including the interpretive research paradigm, longitudinal design, interviews and reflective journals are discussed.

Chapter IV, “the Pre-Training Phase”, presents the first analysis of a series of four data collection phases. Participants in this study were categorised into five different groups in accordance with their orientations and dispositions for analysis. They were pre-service PE teachers with orientations towards coaching, teaching affinity, apprehensiveness, pragmatic consideration and easy-going style. Their teacher perspectives including characteristics, dispositions and professional conceptions are discussed. It represents an analysis of the origin of participants’ socialisation process. The categories serve as a possible grouping of pre-service PE teachers for future data analysis.

Chapter V, “the Professional Orientation Phase”, suggests how participants experience their professional preparation courses for PE teacher. It is about the first six months after they have joined the programme. “How they valued their practical and

theoretical modules?”, “What kind of knowledge that the participants perceived as being salient?” and “How they learnt professionally?” are discussed.

Chapter VI, “the First School Experience Phase”, discusses participants’ experiences and perceptions on their first teaching experience in secondary schools. They involve such issues as: “How they shaped their teacher perspectives when encountering with the school experience?”, “What kind of socialising strategies they adopted for resolving dissonances?”, “How they socialised the job of the PE teachers?” and “How they perceived their socialising agents?”.

Chapter VII is titled “the Professional Reorientation Phase”. After the first school experience, participants continued to develop through the teacher education programme. Moreover, they also involved in their second teaching experience in school that was scheduled prior to their graduation. Such experiences further enabled them to shape their teacher perspectives on professional conceptions, socialising strategies and agents. Issues and processes of their reorientation are dealt with in this chapter.

Chapter VIII and XI draw conclusions from different phases. They provide a summary for this study and draw conclusion to the findings concerning the pre-service PE teachers’ socialisation processes. They illustrate how such an in-depth study could add to the existing research work on pre-service PE teachers. Recommendations for the improvement of the training programme for PE teachers in the Hong Kong Institute of Education are also presented.

#### **1.4 Occupational Socialisation of PE Teachers**

A review of literature in pre-service PE teachers and their learning-to-teach process



illustrates three theoretical perspectives as suggested by Bain (1990) and Stroot and Williamson (1993). They are:

1. the behavioural analysis perspective;
2. the developmental perspective; and
3. the socialization perspective.

The behavioural analysis perspective, which articulates with the natural science research tradition, has dominated the development of PE pedagogy in the United States. Under this perspective, researchers believe in the power of scientific knowledge, which comes from observable data, empirical methods and scientific objectivity. Numerous instruments have been identified and constructed to observe and measure the effectiveness of PE teachers, PE lessons and training programmes (see Darst et al, 1989; Metzger, 1990). As such, a number of variables for effective teaching and teacher education programmes are identified. Pre-service PE teachers are thought to be trained in accordance with these variables. However, many have argued that this perspective falls short of its claims on theoretical generalisation and determinacy. This approach has also been criticised for their “impersonality” and “unreflexibility”, illustrating a discrete distance between the inquirer and the objects of the inquiry and the over reliance on the casual relationship among variables (Earls,1986a).

Within the developmental perspective, Fuller’s “Developmental Teacher Concerns” is commonly adopted for the study of pre-service teachers and their learning-to-teach process. According to Fuller’s (1969) developmental theory, his “teacher concerns” consisted of stages, namely “self”, “task” and “impact”. Teachers were believed to pass through the stages in accordance with their accumulated experiences and maturity. Fuller (1969) defined a concern as a state of arousal that demands resolution by a teacher before more mature concern could be considered. Through completing the “Teacher Concerns Questionnaire”, teachers’ stages of development could be detected.

Accordingly, pre-service teachers in their early stage of teaching concentrated on coping with a new environment that their strongest concern would be about the self, such as the concerns of being liked and accepted by pupils, pleasing supervisors and maintaining pupils' discipline. Sequentially, the trainee teachers progressed to focus on concerns with the tasks of teaching, such as class size, time pressure and quantity and quality of the instructional materials. After mastering the first two stages of concerns, teachers would begin to have concern about the "impact" of their instruction on individual pupils, such as diagnosing pupils' learning problems, motivating pupils and assuring their intellectual and emotional growth.

As Fuller and most of his followers claimed, a better understanding of the stages of teachers' concerns could support the structuring of a teacher education programme that could address pre-service teachers' concerns at appropriate time, and thus ultimately enabled teaching experience more relevant to the trainees' needs (Fuller, 1969). Knowledge of teachers' concerns might also be used to explain the socialisation processes experienced by the teachers within the school system.

However, there were conflicting evidences regarding Fuller's theorized stages of concern as to whether they occurred in a predictable and uni-directional progression. For example, Hynes-Dusel (1999) employed Fuller's Development theory for the study of the concerns of 25 pre-service PE teachers from two different universities in the US. Questionnaires were administered on three different occasions at the beginning, the middle of and the end of the teaching practice semester. These findings did not support Fuller's developmental theory as most of the student teachers did not exhibit their concerns in a progressive manner in accordance with the "self", "task" and "impact".

Stroot and Williamson (1993) commented that studies using developmental perspective like Fuller's Developmental Teacher Concerns did provide another context in understanding teachers' ability to work within the school or university setting. However,

they remarked that the sequence of concerns should begin with the pre-training stage, where pre-service PE teachers tended to identify themselves as pupils rather than as teachers. When pre-service PE teachers were engaged in their teacher education programme, they usually could not fully experience the reality of teaching, and thus might not have concern with the required tasks. Regarding the stage of impact, pre-service teachers were found to have concern with their own teaching performance rather than that of pupils' learning.

Capel (1998) provided findings on studying stage development of the perspectives of pre-service PE teachers. She commented that other factors like the pre-service teachers' background, experience, personality and school placement were important in understanding their perspectives. On the whole, the developmental stage oriented model was found to be simple, rigid, and incompatible with the dynamic and problematic socialisation processes of pre-service PE teachers.

As regards the socialisation perspective, it stresses an understanding of the processes of how the dynamics of the socialising mechanisms that influence pre-service teachers' orientations, conceptions and practices. The use of socialisation perspective for studying teachers can be dated back to Waller's (1932) classical study– "the Sociology of Teaching". Waller offered a detailed and systematic application of the concepts of sociology and social psychology to the social phenomenon of school life.

It was not until 1970s, that Burlingame (1972) and Pooley (1972, 1975) introduced the use of sociological perspective to research PE. These early studies adopted the "functionalist" perspective which has its roots in Durkheim's and later Parsons' work (1951). Socialisation is regarded as a rigid learning process within which "one is expected to learn the desired role to become a functioning element in a social system" (Parsons, 1951, p205). The aim is to provide explanations of the status quo, social order, consensus and social integration. The outcomes of socialising pre-service teachers are meant to mould the apprentices into the models and practices of experienced teachers and tutors.

Little attention was given to the dynamics and complex nature of the socialisation process. Moreover, trainee teachers being studied were not considered as active agents in determining their course of action. Thus, the use of functionalist perspective might pose difficulties in explaining why some teachers resist instituted values and societal norms advocated in their teacher education programme. On the whole, it fails to account for individual differences.

Following Burlingame (1972) and Pooley (1972, 1975), Lawson (1983a, 1983b, 1986, 1988) and Templin (1979, 1981, 1989) started to employ teacher socialisation perspective as a theoretical framework for investigating how pre-service PE teachers and beginning teachers learn to teach PE. Lawson (1986) used the term “occupational socialisation”.

It includes all of the kinds of socialisation that initially influence persons to enter the field of PE and later are responsible for their perceptions and actions as teacher educators and teachers. Five such kinds of socialisation may comprise occupational socialisation: societal, sport, professional, organisational, and bureaucratic. (p.107)

Research in the occupational socialisation of PE teachers in the last two decades shifted from the functionalist to the problematic, dynamic and dialectical approaches with a number of research focuses. Instead of viewing socialisation simply as a cumulative process, pre-service PE teachers are expected to actively develop their perspectives in terms of their dispositions, orientations, professional conceptions, socialising strategies and agents in problematic and dynamic socialising contexts.

This construction requires pre-service PE teachers to actively negotiate and interpret their preconceived conceptions in response to the demands and constraints of the educational contexts. Sometimes, the teachers resist against the force of socialisation dialectically. In essence, pre-service PE teachers and the institution interact to establish respective processes of socialisation.

Lawson (1983a,b) suggested that there were four assumptions for his occupational socialisation model. Firstly, occupational socialisation is regarded as a life-long process involving three distinct phases of socialisation namely, acculturation, professional socialisation and organisational socialisation. Acculturation refers to the impacts of the biography of pre-service PE teachers before joining the PE teacher education programme since birth. Pre-service PE teachers' conceptions about PE before joining the PE teacher education programme illustrate the development of societal ideologies concerning PE. Lawson (1983a) describes it as "a system of dominant meanings carried by all of society's institutions" (p.4). Professional socialisation signifies pre-service PE teachers' learning-to-teach process through undergoing their pre-service teacher education programme. Lawson (1983a) explains such socialisation phase as a "process by means of which would-be and experienced teachers acquire and maintain the values, sensitivities, skills, and knowledge that are deemed ideal for teaching PE" (p.4). Organisational socialisation explains the influence of the workforce when pre-service PE teachers enter into their PE teaching career in schools.

Secondly, the occupational socialisation acknowledges the pre-training or anticipatory socialisation experience as being important to teacher socialisation. Such an assumption differs from the traditional one that teacher socialisation begins with professional preparation through induction and in-service training.

Thirdly, operations in PE are "institutionalised" that illustrates the fact that both PE teachers and pre-service PE teachers being subject to the socialisation influence tend to reproduce the taken-for granted conceptions and practices. This assumption explains some of the prevalent conceptions and practices taking place in the field of PE.

Fourthly, socialisation is "problematic and not automatic". Although operations in PE are institutionalised, people under instruction try to transform them. As the result, it may be the case that intended socialisation outcomes are different from the actual results. Pre-service PE teachers may encounter various types of socialisations simultaneously

making the occupational socialisation concepts problematic. However, understanding and recognising the differences in the types and processes of socialisation is helpful in detecting and explaining their differences in socialisation outcomes.

The above assumptions indicate the importance of adopting the dynamic rather than the functionalist perspective in viewing the socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in this study. The dynamic perspective provides a more comprehensive theory of socialisation by acknowledging the constraints that originates from the existing social structures. At the same time, it takes into account how recognising the agency of pre-service teachers constructs their own professional perspectives and development.

This study adopted the occupational socialisation model and focused on investigating the first two phases. In order to follow the on-going professional development of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong, a longitudinal type of study was designed for identifying the developmental changes of pre-service PE teachers during their socialisation processes.

Most of the studies using a socialisation approach seek to identify the basic structure of belief of pre-service teachers. However, Pajares (1992) commented that these studies were not consistent in conceptualising the construct of socialisation. The lack of construct precision had resulted in numerous definitions in terms of biographies, subjective warrants, attitudes, values, ideologies, conceptions, dispositions and implicit theories.

In this study, the term “teacher perspectives” is used to conceptualise the construct of socialisation. It is regarded as more than personal beliefs, ideas, attitudes and dispositions for it includes the notion of actions or agency. It is also used in relation to the demands of contextual situation. Becker, et al (1961) define the construct of “teacher perspectives” as

a co-ordinated set of ideas and actions a person uses in dealing with some problematic situation, to refer to a person’s ordinary way of thinking and feeling about and acting in such a situation. These thoughts and actions are co-ordinated in

the sense that the actions flow reasonably, from the actor's point of view, from the ideas contained in the perspective. Similarly, the ideas can be seen by an observer to be one of the possible sets of ideas which might form the underlying rationale for the person's actions and are seen by the actor as providing a justification for acting as he does. (p.34)

As Tabachick and Zeichner (1984) suggested, "teacher perspectives" refers to "the ways in which teachers think about their work (e.g. purposes and goals, conceptions of children and curriculum) and the ways in which they give meanings to their beliefs through their actions in classrooms" (p.28).

In fact, the use of "teacher perspectives" as a construct has been employed in a number of PE socialisation researches (Arrighi & Young, 1987; Dodds, 1989; Doolittle, Dodds & Placek, 1993; Graham, 1991a; Hutchinson, 1993; Capel, 1998; Curtner-Smith, 1997; 1998; 2001; Supaporn and Griffin, 1998; Chow and Fry, 1999; Fernandez-Balboa, 2000; McCullick, 2001). A wide range of dimensions relating to teacher perspectives has been identified that include: beliefs, knowledge, behaviours, teaching experience, conceptions of the purposes of PE in school, field experience, curriculum development and instructional elements.

In this study, the term "teacher perspectives" is used to refer to dispositions, professional conceptions, socialising strategies, socialising agents and agency of the pre-service PE teachers. Dispositions represent the pre-service PE teachers' own distinctive characteristics and orientations. The term "professional conceptions" is employed to describe pre-service PE teachers' perceptions on the pre-training view on PE, the purposes of school PE and the requirements for PE teaching. Socialising strategies refer to the means employed to resolve their dissonances. Socialising agents refer to the perceptions of pre-service PE teachers on the impacts of agents on their learning-to-teach processes, including their own parents, secondary school teachers, coaches, PE teachers, tutors and PE teacher education programme.

The above discussion on the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers has identified the theoretical framework and key concepts relating to this study. A further literature review within this area of research in the subsequent chapter facilitated the formulation of research questions and issues. As a practitioner in PE teacher education for nearly twenty years, the writer in this study is enthusiastic in gaining more understanding on issues of occupational socialisation. Given the unique socio-cultural contexts of Hong Kong, it is hoped that research findings generated from this study will contribute towards a better understanding of pre-service PE teachers and their development, thus gaining substantial insights for improving the PE teacher education programme.

### 1.5 The Study

This study was concerned with how twenty pre-service PE teachers socialised to become PE teachers in their two-year full-time teacher education programme organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Pre-service PE teachers taking the two-year full-time teacher education programme were required to choose a/ two electives in terms of school subjects (PE is one of the electives); b/ three core course components and c/ two field experiences scheduled in four distinct semesters. The three core course components include modules that are related to the professional studies, general education and complementary programmes.

The investigation mainly focused on the PE curriculum. The two-year training programme for pre-service PE teachers organised by the Department of Physical Education and Sports Science was signified as one of the fastest tracks that pre-service PE teachers could become PE teachers. Potential pre-service PE teachers had to pass an admission test before being admitted to the programme. The test included assessments on their physical fitness level and sports skills proficiency. The aim of the two-year



professional preparation programme was simply to equip pre-service PE teachers with necessary skills and knowledge to teach PE effectively and efficiently in secondary schools in Hong Kong. It composed of 14 credit-bearing Institute-based modules segmenting and packaging different types of knowledge within which six were subsumed under the “curriculum domain” while eight were organised as “academic” modules. Modules of the curriculum domain included “Motor Learning”; “Teaching of PE”; “Curriculum Studies in PE”; “PE Evaluation in Secondary Schools”; “PE Administration” and “Foundations and Principles of PE”. They aimed at introducing pre-service PE teachers with academic, pedagogical and curricular knowledge foundations for teaching PE in schools. The content of the academic domain offered options of ten professional activities and physiological foundations of PE. They served as the content knowledge for building up pre-service PE teachers’ repertoire in theoretical and physical skill competence. The overall structure is summarised in Appendix 1 for reference.

Through adopting the occupational socialisation perspective, the study begins with the identification of the characteristics that the twenty pre-service PE teachers brought to their socialisation processes. It follows with an analysis of the transformation of their “teacher perspectives” while they were engaging in the different stages of the PE teacher education programme and the socio-cultural dynamics that experienced. It was important that attempt should also be made to discuss the qualitative changes in the participants’ socialisation processes and the development of their professional knowledge. Accordingly, the following research questions were formulated for this study:

- What characteristics, past experiences, dispositions and orientations did the participants bring to their PE teacher education programme?
- Why did pre-service PE teachers join the teacher training programme?
- How did they learn professionally?

- What were the changes in the participants' teacher perspectives when encountering different stages of teacher education programme?
- How did the participants react when they came across different stages of teacher education experiences?
- What were the dynamics that shaped their pre-service occupational socialisation processes?

There were a few assumptions that underlined the rationale of the research as well as the methodology adopted. Firstly, it was believed that pre-service PE teachers in this study were capable of thinking critically, applying knowledge, solving problems and negotiating meaning during their learning-to-teach processes. They could actively make sense of new information by making reflection on their prior knowledge and experience. They could construct meanings from their learning-to-teach processes in order that learning occurred. On the other hand, their construction of meanings was thought to be influenced by the existing social structures. In this sense, knowledge gained from the training programme was based on their interpretation and construction of their experiences in their learning-to-teach processes rather than something “out there”. Inevitably, the meaning they constructed about their learning had to be understood before any suggestions for improving the quality of the PE teacher education programme could be made.

Secondly, the participants possessed a variety of characteristics and could be categorised. Thirdly, the “teacher perspectives” of the participants were traceable and could be defined in descriptive features. Fourthly, an “interpretive approach” could detect the inside stories of the participants. Fifthly, interviews supplemented by reflective journal and critical incident technique could help in the collection of information concerning occupational socialisation of the participants. Lastly, the participants in this study were willing to provide accurate information on their experiences of their

occupational socialisation.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

The values of this study are manifold. A thorough understanding of pre-service PE teachers and their learning-to-teach processes should provide useful information for quality improvement of teacher education programme. Thus this research intends to provide qualitative evidences to enhance a deeper understanding of Hong Kong pre-service PE teachers and their occupational socialisation processes.

It represents a specific, idiosyncratic, but rare inquiry into the topic, especially with the Hong Kong context. Based on its findings, different dimensions and problems in pre-service teachers' socialisation processes could be identified. As a result, concrete and substantial suggestions as the approaches to enhance teacher trainees' confidence in professional learning can be formulated, and hence contribute to their desirable growth as a teacher.

For PE teacher training, a fuller appreciation of the complexities of the pre-service teacher socialisation processes may help teacher educators to reflect on and review their practices so that desirable support to the pre-service teachers can be ensured. Accordingly, it should enable them to see the consequences of their training and guidance so that they may formulate appropriate approaches in their interactions with pre-service PE teachers. Thus, the findings from this study can serve as the backdrop for recommending possible pedagogical changes. Moreover, knowledge about the processes of learning-to-teach can also help to structure, foster and assess suitable programmes in order that desirable professional growth can be facilitated. The results of this study have the potential directly or indirectly to influence some kind of programmatic changes. They should also clarify some of the unknown factors concerning professional preparation of PE teachers. It, in turn, can help to counterbalance some well-intended but radical and ill-informed motives

on the part of the policy-makers.

A better informed understanding of the pre-service teacher socialisation can also shed lights on the value that a society placed on pre-service PE teachers, practising PE teachers, teacher educators, school PE and the professional preparation programme as a whole. The perspectives that the pre-service PE teachers brought into teacher education programmes and how such perspectives evolved when interacting with their teacher training should convey useful information for discerning the traditions, morals, and values that defined the contemporary culture of PE and PE teacher education.

### **1.7 Summary**

The purpose of this introductory chapter is to present an overall picture of the investigation. It starts with highlighting the purposes and importance of the study on Hong Kong pre-service PE teachers and their learning-to-teach processes. It explains the rationale and assumptions of adopting the occupational socialisation model to guide the investigation. The model is regarded as a comprehensive theory for understanding the dynamic, dialectical and problematic nature of the pre-service PE teachers' socialisation processes. The notion of "teacher perspectives" used in this study for describing the orientations, dispositions, professional conceptions, socialising strategies, agents and agency of the pre-service PE teachers is discussed. Finally, a discussion is also made on the major research questions as identified and the significance of the research findings.

In the next chapter, the discussion on the development of the PE teacher education in Hong Kong and the review of literature on the studies of pre-service PE teachers and their socialisation processes will be presented. It aims to provide the contextual background for the study.

## **Chapter II**

### **The Research, Studies and Development in relation to Physical Education Teacher Education and Training in Hong Kong**

## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with the discussion of selected historical developments of professional training programmes for PE teachers in Hong Kong. Three significant periods illustrating distinct socio-historical and political factors that have shaped the development of the curriculum for PE teachers are identified chronologically in the following three sections. They are followed by a review of the literature concerning studies on pre-service PE teachers and their socialisation processes both locally and abroad. Finally, there is a summary section comprising overall comment and reflection.

A review of the historical development of the PE teacher education curriculum in Hong Kong indicates that there are phases of development, namely, practical, technological and academic. This chapter attempts to illustrate that, despite all the effort made in the development, a crucial factor has been missed out, the voice of the pre-service PE teachers. The literature review on the studies of PE teachers, especially their socialization processes, serves to provide a further indication of how the present study can help programme planners and researchers to listen to the voices of the programme participants and thus enhance future programme design work.

## **2.2 Before the Sixties - Practical-oriented training programme for PE teachers**

Hong Kong became a British colony in 1841 but it was not until the 1930s that the British Government began to invest in teacher education (Burney Report, 1935). Through an enactment of the educational ordinance, the Northcote Teacher Training College for training local teachers was established in 1939. The measures aimed at improving the quality of teachers and counteracting all incoming political influence in schools.

In 1947, PE was first regarded as one of the electives in the one, later two and three-year teacher education programmes (Northcote College of Education, 1989, p.41). PE teacher education programmes were mainly organised by the three Colleges of

Education namely Northcote (founded in 1939), Grantham (1951), and Sir Robert Black (1960). Before that, “physical instructors” (the term used at that time) could be anyone who volunteered for the job. It is estimated that over 90% of PE teachers in schools received their training in the Colleges and therefore their training programmes had direct impact on the quality of PE teaching in Hong Kong.

The curricula for training PE teachers were similar across the three Teacher Colleges and had been developed through years of practice. They were strongly influenced by practices in the United Kingdom. The “Syllabus of Physical Education for Schools” issued by the Board of Education (1933) of the British government was the standard text of reference at that time. In the Syllabus, the emphasis was on practical ideas about teaching, suggestions for lesson plans, teaching procedures and activities. In 1964, the Education Department of Hong Kong published its first local syllabus titled “A Scheme of PE for Primary Schools”. The Syllabus, which consisted of one hundred and twenty three pages, covered mainly the sample lessons with callisthenics and strengthening exercises, games and folk dance for primary 1 to 6. The two official syllabi for schools became the main sources of information governing the content and mode of the training programme for PE teachers.

It was not until the early seventies that teacher education programmes for PE teachers were laid down briefly (A sample of PE syllabus is included in Appendix 2 for reference). Before that, teacher educators had a great degree of freedom to decide on the content of the training programme. The focus was mainly on the craft, technique and artistry of the teacher educators who provided practical models of teaching for pre-service PE teachers. To be able to implement the two official syllabi (Board of Education, 1933; Education Department, 1964) in school was the main emphasis.

Pre-service PE teachers were treated as apprentices. They received relatively little theory in their teacher education programme. They were introduced to the goals, scope and syllabus of PE in school and the general movement principles. Teacher educators’

practical knowledge that emphasised ability in performing the skills, analysing movement and prescribing appropriate corrections in order to improve these skills formed the major components. A retired principal lecturer in PE recalled how he experienced his teacher training in the fifties:

Physical training or drills was the term used for the subject. Classes were conducted in rigid line formations to instructors' order. Free standing, rhythmic drills, exercises and traditional vaulting movements dominated the lessons" (Northcote College of Education, 1989, p.71).

One can imagine that the training of PE teachers in those days was dominated by physical skill-oriented activities in the form of "drills". Their teaching techniques modelled on those of the teacher educators were a measure of the effectiveness of the teacher education programme. Pre-service PE teachers adhered strictly to the prescriptions of the official syllabi and the directives of their tutors in the Colleges. This type of "worthwhile knowledge" was disseminated to schools unproblematically.

### **2.3 The Seventies and Eighties - the rise of sports and the "education through the physical" shift**

In May 1967, anti-colonial riots fuelled by the Cultural Revolution in Mainland China broke out. The consequence of the social unrest brought about the issue of using recreation and sports programmes to pacify and educate the youths. It was the policy of the Colonial Government to use this measure to solve the social problems. As a result, the "Recreation and Sport Services Unit" under the Education Department was set up and then the "Council for Recreation and Sports" was established for promoting sports programmes in every district of Hong Kong in 1973 (Hong Kong Annual Reports, 1967-1975).



The rise of sport as an education priority was reflected in the setting up of the Jubilee Sports Centre for training elite athletes in 1982. The report, “Sports in Education” published by the Council for Recreation and Sport in June 1988 clearly stressed the significance of sports activities as an essential component of an all round education. It recommended forty-one measures to the Education Department, National Sports Associations, Schools and Tertiary Institutes at all levels for promoting and developing sports in Hong Kong through education.

Accordingly, the concepts of “cultivating elitists”, “building character”, “making worthy use of leisure” and “life-time commitment” through sports gained an important place in the curriculum of training for PE teachers. Competitive sports gradually dominated the content of the official PE syllabi (Curriculum Development Committee, 1975; 1980; Curriculum Development Council 1988) as common core activities in school (Appendix 3). The public accepted that participation in competitive sports would prevent young people from being left idle, assist their personal development and furthermore promote social unity. Crum (1992) argued that such a conception inclined towards the “conformist socialisation through sports” model within which the selective characteristic of sports was admitted and the sportive status quo was maintained. This concept coincided with the present development of the sport education model advocated by Siedentop (1994). Indirectly, sport was recognised by the Government as a relevant and important social domain for maintaining social stability.

At the same time, there was a worldwide shift of emphasis in PE teaching from focusing on the purely physical to an all-rounded development of children. The name of “Physical Training” was changed to “Physical Education”, which embedded the aspirations of the subject specialists to include a wider range of educational intentions. It was common at the time for the humanistic slogan of “education through the physical” to be highlighted in PE Syllabi for Hong Kong schools (Curriculum Development

Committee, 1975; 1980; Curriculum Development Council, 1988; 2002). On this basis, “the ultimate aim of PE is the optimal development of the physically, mentally and socially integrated and adjusted individual through guided instruction and participation in selected total body sports and rhythmic and gymnastic activities conducted according to social and hygienic standards” (Curriculum Development Committee, 1975, p.1; 1980, p.1).

The developmental psychology and progressive pedagogical development in the Western World, especially the rise of the progressive education movement in the United States of America in the early twentieth century, was believed to have had a strong influence towards such a shift. The use of physical activities was emphasized as a means of achieving the developmental goals. The concept of “balanced curriculum” and an adoption of the multi-activity model to achieve the wide spectrum of developmental goals began to dominate the teacher education curriculum. Accordingly, objectives were formulated in relatively abstract terms from general physical betterment, personal development, and character building, to social and aesthetic education.

Training programmes for PE teachers were dominated by competitive sports such as gymnastics, athletics, swimming, team- and racket-games as the core contents. Although educational gymnastics and modern dance, which were thought to be more capable of cultivating pupils’ creativity and personal meanings, were incorporated, they were never implemented fully.

The Colleges of Education at that time were operating according to two overriding but problematic principles: Firstly, the quantity of teachers was a priority concern because the balance of demand and supply of teachers in schools was of prime importance. Secondly, the accountability of training of teachers was based on cost effectiveness.

Furthermore, teacher educators, as civil servants, were required to follow standardised governmental procedures and regulations to manage their departments and the job performance of subordinates. It was commonly believed by most civil servants

that “the less one initiated, the fewer mistakes one would commit”. Under such bureaucratic structure and working philosophy, teacher educators were obliged to follow closely the work procedures, and therefore seldom initiated any innovation.

The course content of local training programmes for PE teachers was stated in much detail in the eighties with three major components (Appendix 4). They included the professional activity component, the curriculum and pedagogical component and the theoretical foundations of PE, which aimed at equipping pre-service PE teachers to teach PE competently in schools. The emphasis was mainly on “how” or “where” rather than “why”. Pre-service PE teachers were expected to accept the taken-for-granted knowledge of teaching and legitimated their teacher status upon graduation automatically. It resulted in their inclination towards more conservative and preservative modes of pedagogy, as they were the privileged group who had benefited from the teacher education system. Learning-to-teach was viewed as a transmission process. Knowledge of teaching was transferred to potential teachers apolitically. Nevertheless, the practical knowledge of the PE teacher educators was valued.

## **2.4 The Nineties- an academic shift**

Under the effort and influence of Henry’s (1964) work, recognizing PE as an academic discipline in tertiary institutions of the United States of America, other cognate disciplines have been increasingly incorporated into the training programmes for PE teachers in the Western World. These sub-disciplines included exercise physiology, biomechanics, motor learning and control, sport psychology, sport sociology, philosophy, adapted PE, sports history, sports activity and curriculum. The purpose would be to provide a broad-based academic background for preparing PE teachers. Hence one of the main consequences of the incorporation was the transformation of a large area of professional knowledge in the form of textbooks. Gradually, discipline-based knowledge

became an important component and dominated in the programme for training PE teachers. The development represented the process of the intellectualisation of PE and an establishment of a knowledge-based teacher education curriculum. Many believe that such a curriculum is crucially important if PE practitioners are to fight effectively to retain a place in academia.

Local PE practitioners, who opted to advance their academic development in PE abroad, namely, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand, returned to Hong Kong with the “sub-disciplines” concept. Accordingly, the course content of training for PE teachers was amended to include knowledge from the sub-disciplines such as exercise physiology, biomechanics, sports psychology, motor learning and sports studies. Obviously, the curriculum became more academic and theoretically oriented.

The adoption of the sub-discipline model was speeded up in Hong Kong as various local tertiary institutions have begun to initiate their degree programmes for PE teachers since 1989. The Chinese University of Hong Kong initiated the first Bachelor of Education Degree with PE as one of the elective subjects. The University of Hong Kong subsequently launched Master of Education and Bachelor of Education Degrees with PE as options for serving teachers. In 1998, the Baptist University included training of PE teachers in a three-year full-time Bachelor of Science in Recreation Management course. Moreover, they started to make use of scientific knowledge from research findings as bases of their PE teaching.

The Hong Kong Institute of Education is no exception in developing the discipline- and research-based teacher education programme. Following its establishment through merging five former colleges of education in 1994, the newly formed Institute of Education has made great efforts in pursuing its university and self-accreditation status. During the upgrading process, there was an increasing need to validate the status, worth

and complexity of its teacher education programmes. Staff of the Department of Physical Education and Sports Science subsumed under the Institute have to be proactive in such validation processes involving revising and developing the professional preparation programmes for PE teachers with a more disciplinary and research based focus in order to be compatible with other tertiary institutes. There was a natural tendency to emphasise the development of the new issues rather than to build upon the old ones, thus subtly devaluing both the prior experience and the status of the knowledge of the practitioners. As a result, teacher education programmes were broadened and “academicized” with discipline-based and scientific knowledge while some cherished and long established professional practices were either challenged or rejected. Training of PE teachers shifted away from learning through practical experience to the emphasis on research findings and a discipline-based knowledge.

Teaching from the perspectives of an academic discipline, specialisation and research findings had dominated most of the preparation programmes for PE teachers in the tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. The development that occurred was similar to what happened in many countries of the Western World (see Talbot, 1998 for situation of the UK; Bain, 1990 and Ingham, 1997 for the US; Brooker and Macdonald, 1995 for Australia; Whitson and Macintosh, 1990 for Canada). Some of them renamed their programmes as: sports science; kinesiology; recreation management and movement arts and sciences. These programmes enabled the PE graduates to pursue careers such as sports coaches, recreation managers, and sports scientists.

Lawson (1998) worried that as the programmes becoming more academic, theoretical and research oriented, there would be a tendency to move teachers away from teaching in school. Time allotted to the pedagogical aspects and the prevailing theory/practice division within the profession has downplayed the practical dimensions of PE. The formative element of broadening personal development, practical experiences,

and the social and moral responsibilities of teachers has been neglected. Learning-to-teach, gradually becomes less important in the tertiary institutes when compared with other academic and research activities. There are debates about issues of disciplinary versus professional orientation or sometimes the theoretical / research versus practical / applied dichotomy of the subject as highlighted by Freeman (1997).

Research on training programmes for PE teachers in China and Hong Kong, though limited, also illustrated such a conflict. Yang et al (1997) studied 1340 PE teachers in Mainland China and Hong Kong and found that sub-disciplines of human anatomy, physiology, exercise physiology, exercise and health and exercise psychology were ranked as more important than skill competency, curricular and pedagogical competence. Chin et al (1998) reported similar findings in their survey of 511 PE teachers in Hong Kong. By way of contrast, 208 secondary school teachers in Hong Kong overwhelmingly agreed that sports pedagogy and a wide-ranged skill repertoire were more important to the job of PE teachers as reported by Wong and Lobo (2002). This reflects considerable disagreement on the fundamental question of what sort of discipline the training programme for PE teachers ought to be.

Within sub-disciplines, sports science became dominant in the curriculum of the teacher education programme for PE teachers in Hong Kong. This was due to the return of many local physical educators who graduated from their medico-scientific post-graduate programmes abroad. They gradually took up the leadership positions in the tertiary institutions and produced scientific knowledge through research. Sports scientists generated knowledge scientifically and grounded it in terms of human and society needs i.e. improving sports performance and promoting optimal health and body maintenance. They successfully created a “professionalised sports science system” and became sports scientist experts in Hong Kong.

The old-fashion departmental title in terms of PE was no longer able to communicate sub-disciplinary intentions and lost their prestige vis-à-vis colleagues of other disciplines. The term “Sports Science” was incorporated into the departmental title of PE in the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1989, the University of Hong Kong in 1993, and the Hong Kong Institute of Education in 1998. Sports Science secures its importance in the curriculum for PE teachers while the influence of the humanities and soft social sciences were gradually, marginalized.

A summary of the number and types of research articles published in the “Journal of PE and Recreation” (the only local PE journal in Hong Kong published since 1995) illustrated such a situation. Sports science articles (33) and quantitative research studies (59) dominated the PE research arena in Hong Kong when compared with that related to qualitative studies (4) (Appendix 5).

Another issue was the domination of technocratic rationality; the field of teacher education was characterised by the intimate relationship between research, expertise, policy-making and legitimate practices. There was a power hierarchy with researchers considered as experts in the field because of their production of research-based knowledge that in turn informs policy and practices. The researchers were distinguished from those “technists” who were to be informed by such knowledge. The term “technists” is simply used in this study to refer to those teachers who mainly focus on their technical skills and knowledge of teaching. For them, wider social and political issues are not their concerns.

Given the popularity of neo-positivism in the research field in the past decades, behaviourist and social behavioural research had dominated the PE research agendas and the training programmes related in teacher education. Since sports science had a natural-science origin, it accelerated its domination and it also reflected PE practitioners’ satisfaction with their putative role as “technists”. They took the research-knowledge

unproblematically. The use of behaviourist research knowledge dominated PE teaching and was regarded as the sole indication of the effectiveness of teachers' behaviours.

Teaching PE was viewed as scientific knowledge in the forms of laws and principles because they seemed to be helpful for pre-service PE teachers in developing teaching skills and knowledge. Such scientific knowledge may sometimes provide solutions for their practical problems in the playground. However, it also resulted in shaping the “technocratic-rationality” within which three basic problematic conceptions in training PE teachers arose. Firstly, the law-like generalisation of the knowledge when recognised by the teacher educators and passed on to the PE teachers was regarded as the sole organ of truth. Hence, it was inculcated as the commonly accepted knowledge to pupils in schools. Secondly, it led to a more serious impact on the development of the pre-service PE teachers by suggesting that knowledge could be taught unproblematically. This belief then became neutral, static, and universal. Thirdly, teaching PE could be reduced to behaviour modification strategies and perceived as conditioning and manipulating pupils (Feiman-Nemser, 1990). Fernandez-Balboa (1997a) also alerted the PE community to the misconception that the future PE teaching as a profession rested mainly on improvements of scientific knowledge. It would be certain that this phenomenon constrained educationalists towards a prescriptive teacher education curriculum rather than a problematic one.

The pedagogy of training programmes for PE teachers had shifted from the “practical” towards the “technological”. The technically defined knowledge from the behavioural research was adopted at the expense of developmental, affective, and social processes and outcomes. Tinning (1991) commented that it resulted in “physical education teacher education being technical over critical”, “PE teachers as functionalists” and “the sole emphasis of instrumental concerns”. They became topics of considerable debate and dispute. The possibilities of pre-service PE teachers to value equitable and other social issues were not the major focuses.



The changes from practical, technological to academic emphases and the reliance on the teacher educators' practical knowledge to the scientific knowledge from the sub-disciplines and research findings summarised the development of the PE teacher education programmes in Hong Kong for the last Century. However, the perspective of the pre-service PE teachers as the learners in the PE teacher education programme seemed not to be recognised throughout the development of PE teacher education in Hong Kong. The pre-service PE teachers are seldom given a channel to express how much they value such changes. Which types of knowledge are their preferred modes of learning, the practical knowledge or the scientific knowledge? In fact these learners are the ones who actually engage in the programme on a daily basis. Accordingly, they can provide a valid perspective on how they should be educated and what they should know in order to teach competently in school. Their needs and opinion on their own learning-to-teach processes have to be respected. Thus, launching the study concerning an understanding of pre-service PE teachers, their experiences of their learning-to-teach processes and their responses to the PE teacher education programme is a timely initiative to the development of PE teacher education in Hong Kong.

## **2.5 A review of literature concerning studies on pre-service PE teachers and their occupational socialisation process**

As discussed in Chapter I, studies adopting the occupational socialisation perspective are more capable of informing the dynamic processes of student teachers' professional development. A review of research on PE teachers using the socialization perspective will help to illuminate the focuses of this study and identify the directions for the investigations to be conducted.

### **2.5.1 The importance of longitudinal type of study**

Studies adopting the occupational socialisation approach investigate a wide variety of issues. They include the development of professional beliefs about PE teaching (Schempp, 1986; Hutchinson, 1993; Green, 2000; Wright, 2001; Matanin and Collier, 2003); anticipatory, recruitment and career choice (Dewar, 1989; Templin, 1989; Hutchinson, 1991; 1993; Curtner-Smith, 1998); pre-service PE teachers' professional learning, behaviour and conceptions when encountering with the PE teacher education programme (Dolittle et al 1993; Placek et al 1995; Graber, 1989; 1991; 1995; Schempp, 1986; Curtner-Smith 1996; Wright, 2001; Matanin and Collier, 2003) and induction (Schempp, 1990; Stroot et al 1993; Woods and Earls 1995; Williams and Williamson, 1998; O'Bryant et al 2000; Curtner-Smith, 2001; McCullick 2002).

Lawson (1983a, 1983b), Templin and Schempp (1989), Graham (1991b), Schempp and Graber (1992), and Stroot and Williamson (1993) have attempted to draw upon studies to make the available information into a holistic piece of work. However, relatively little information has been generated on the longitudinal changes of individual pre-service PE teachers during their pre-service socialisation. Magnusson et al (1992) explained that longitudinal studies were particularly useful in showing how changing properties of individuals fit together with changing properties of the social system.

In recent years, useful information concerning the development of PE teachers over time has been generated by two longitudinal studies. Wright (2001) conducted an eight-year longitudinal study of 135 participants and followed them through the pre-training, professional socialisation and induction years in Singapore. Through questionnaire and interview techniques, factors affecting the socialisation of PE teachers were studied and the results compared with the existing knowledge. The author claimed that the participants under study exhibited positive and idealistic socialisation in accordance with the programmatic message of their teacher education. Most of the participants "did not wish to maintain a custodial approach to teaching PE" (p.224) and did not have a preference for coaching over teaching. The participants did, in fact, refuse

to maintain the status quo in their teaching during the induction years, but often experienced difficulties as a result.

In their five-year longitudinal study of pre-service PE teachers in the United States of America, Matanin and Collier (2003) studied the beliefs about teaching of three pre-service PE teachers. Through the use of the interview, document analysis and reflective writing, they reported that their participants emphasized effort and participation and were less able to assimilate the message of the teacher education programme on class management and the purpose of PE and pupils' learning because of the strong impact of their personal history. However, most of their participants could identify the characteristics of a good PE teacher as being physically fit in order to serve as a good model. A good PE teacher should be compassionate, have good communication skills and possess good knowledge about PE.

More studies of a similar kind would be needed to provide further information on the developmental changes of pre-service PE teachers. Accordingly, in this study, the longitudinal type of study was adopted for detecting the developmental changes of pre-service PE teachers during their two-year socialisation processes.

### **2.5.2 Career Choice**

Lortie (1975) commented that an occupation must possess various "recruitment resources" for attracting people (p.26). Recruitment resources were considered "properties which assist an occupation in competing for manpower and talent". Following Lortie's analogy, Templin et al (1982) suggested that pre-service PE teachers' career choice would be affected by a variety of "attractors" and "facilitators". Attractors were comparative benefits which include material (ie., money, employment security, social mobility) and psychic or symbolic attractions (ie., prestige, power, satisfaction). However, "facilitators" represent the "social mechanisms which help to move people into a given occupation" (Lortie, 1975, p.26). The influence of others (teachers, coaches parents,

friends), the absence of occupational alternatives and the “subjective warrants” (self evaluations in which a person warrants his or her own entrance based on personal qualities) may individually or in combination influence an individual’s decision to become a PE teacher.

Studies on pre-service PE teachers (Pooley, 1972, 1975; Templin et al 1982; Lawson, 1983a, 1983b ; Dewar and Lawson, 1984; Dewar, 1989; Dodds et al, 1991; Curtner-Smith, 1988; 2001; O’Byrant et al, 2000) identified various themes to which they had attributed their entrance into PE teaching. Those themes included “the interpersonal theme” (one’s desire to work with others especially children), “the sports continuation theme” (one’s desire for continued affiliation with sports participation), “the service theme” (one’s desire to serve the society), “the time compatibility theme” (the attraction of a favourable work schedule), “the employment security theme” and “being influenced by others”. These are not exhaustive factors for one’s career choice is usually bounded by the cultural, social, economical and political factors of a particular place.

Accordingly, “why pre-service PE teachers join the teacher training programme in Hong Kong” and “how they negotiate their personal and professional identities among various attractors and facilitators before joining the programme” were two research topics identified for this study.

### **2.5.3 Impacts of the anticipatory socialisation**

Following Lortie (1975) and later Lawson (1983a; 1983b, 1986), it was suggested that pre-service teachers had already developed diverse conceptions about teaching before joining the teacher education programme. Accordingly, images, dispositions, orientations and expectations of the job of PE teacher were expected to form through modelling of their PE teachers, parents, friends, tutors and observing teachers’ work as pupils while serving as “apprentices”. Such internalisation of the professional image and work largely comes from pre-service PE teachers’ imagination, playing, acting or other vicarious

experiences. Such beliefs would affect their subsequent responses when encountering the programme as well as their changes in thinking upon entering the teaching profession.

Hutchinson and Bushner (1996) studied the life experiences and career choice of two delayed-entry undergraduates (aged 30 and 31) in PE. Through the three taped open-ended interviews, the participants were found to describe themselves as self-motivated and self-directed with clear career goals and timelines, which were different from the traditional students (aged 18-24). The researchers called for a closer “examination of students’ subjective warrants”. They claimed “knowledge of career goals, as well as their perspectives on teaching might assist and inspire programme planned for PE teacher education (p.221).

Studies (Hutchinson, 1993; Green 1998 and Curtner-Smith,1998; 1999; 2001;O’Bryant et al 2000; McCullick, 2002; Matanin and Collier, 2003) had indicated that these partial, but somewhat firmly held pre-training conceptions about teaching and learning did have a strong impact on pre-service PE teachers’ selective responses to the teacher education programme and their later practices in schools.

According to Graber (1989), at entry, some expected the programme would offer them valuable experiences and necessities required to fulfil the job of PE teachers. These expectations ranged from obtaining certification, to having desire for exclusive focus on practical content in course work, to simply developing their teaching skills in teaching practices. Some expectations might be highly individual, but most were held in common by all pre-service PE teachers, and thus formed a shared students’ subculture. Many expected that the teacher education programme would equip them for a particular job upon graduation. It was common that some pre-service PE teachers entered the programme with coaching orientation. Accordingly, they would expect training of coaching rather than teaching from their teacher education programme.

Moreover, teacher educators were very often found to overlook such powerful

impacts and consequences in their teaching (Graber, 1989; Schempp, 1989; Placek, et al 1995). Hence, it would not be surprising to find that pre-service PE teachers might leave their pre-service training with little or no change in their “teacher perspectives”. Thus, inquiring into the pre-training “teacher perspectives” of pre-service PE teachers concerning their characteristics, dispositions, orientations, past experiences and their changes when interacting with the teacher education programme is important for understanding pre-service PE teachers’ learning-to-teach processes.

#### **2.5.4 Socialising impacts of the PE teacher education programme**

Apart from the influence of anticipatory socialisation, the PE teacher education programme is thought to be another significant socialising agent for pre-service PE teachers. Pre-service PE teachers are expected to acquire discipline, theoretical instructional knowledge, practices and values propounded in the teacher education programme and by the teacher educators.

Quality teacher training programmes were reported to be useful by pre-service and beginning PE teachers in influencing their beliefs (Graber, 1995) and mastering of managerial skills and teaching styles (Bain and Wenlt, 1983; O’Sullivan, 1989; Doolittle et al, 1993, Wood and Earls, 1995; CurtnerSmith, 1997; Wright 2001).

However, evidence is conflicting as to whether the teacher education programme can exert socialising impacts on the socialisation of pre-service PE teachers. Graber (1995) employed the interviewing technique to study the influence of the teacher education programme on 20 pre-service PE teachers. He found that his participants preferred their professional learning by doing while other pre-service PE teachers were socialized differently as the result of the teacher education programme. All pre-service PE teachers emphatically expressed that they were predominantly influenced by one particular teacher educator, illustrating that a single teacher educator could exert more powerful socialising

impacts on the pre-service PE teachers than the teacher education programme itself.

O'Bryant et al (2000) employed the participant observation and critical incidents techniques to study their MEd students' teaching in the one-year qualitative study. They reported that the PE teacher education programme did not adequately develop the participants' content knowledge. Most of the participants in their study perceived acquiring pedagogical skills as the main focus in their professional preparation. As a result, O'Bryant et al (2000) recommended that teacher educators should be more aware of and interested in the diversity of the learners in the teacher preparation.

Pre-service PE teachers, in some cases, did not experience the value of their teacher education programme. It was also argued that there was little or no impact of the teacher education programme on the pre-service PE teachers and such impacts could be "washed out" when they entered into the bureaucratic school environment (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981; Templin, 1979). "Wash out" is a term used in this study to refer simply to the changes in pre-service PE teachers' beliefs and perceptions on the relevance of the teacher education programme because of the realities in school.

Similarly, although the preparation programme for PE teachers had been in place in Hong Kong for years, relatively little was done on evaluating and understanding how pre-service PE teachers experience the programme in the context of Hong Kong when compared with that of the Western World. A review of local research literature revealed that among 112 articles published in the "Journal of Physical Education and Recreation" from 1995 to 2003, there were only 4 pieces of work related to the preparation programme for PE teachers while 2 highlighted the work-load and stress suggested by PE teachers (Appendix 5). A review of staff publications list of the tertiary institutes within which PE was one of their courses (The CUHK, 1987-02, HKBU, 1995-2002, HKIEd, 1996-02) also confirmed that a relatively limited number of studies had been launched for the study of the teacher training programme, PE teachers and pre-service PE teachers.

John and Shuttleworth (1996) and Li (1999) discussed the current state of professional practice in the preparation of PE teachers in Hong Kong. They suggested that PE departments of tertiary institutes in Hong Kong had successfully rebuilt their body of knowledge on positivistic science in order to improve the status of PE as a legitimate academic university course. However, these departments have marginalized the professional preparation of PE teachers in the process. John and Shuttleworth (1996) called for a re-balancing of the professional preparation programme so that the PE teacher might gain a foothold in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. Li (1999) recommended that the PE teacher education curriculum should cultivate critical PE educators so that they could serve as agents of change in school.

Fu and Fung (1996) discussed the qualities of future PE teachers as identified in the reports of the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Holmes Group of the United States of America. They suggested that there were two major predominant mechanisms in the growth of PE teachers. They included the need for being life-long learners and reflective professionals. The above three articles written by John and Shuttleworth (1996), Li and Fu and Fung (1996) pinpoint useful and possible directions of the education programmes for PE teachers. However, these studies stopped at superficial descriptions and fall short of providing the required theoretical explanations and extensions on local contextual environments. Information concerning the pre-service PE teachers and the dynamics involved in their learning-to-teach processes had not been dealt with. More important, the pre-service PE teachers' conception concerning their learning-to-teach processes had never been tackled as a primary research focus.

On the whole, studies concerning how pre-service PE teachers actually encountered and engaged with the PE teacher education programme and shaped their course to become PE teachers are "inadequate" as described by Graber (1995). Bain (1990) also criticised that the research has been somewhat "piecemeal" (p.765). Thus, studying the pre-service PE teachers' responses to their programme in this study may make a



contribution to the improvement of the training programmes for future teachers.

### **2.5.5 Pre-service PE teachers' professional learning**

In the past decades, how pre-service PE teachers experienced their teacher education programme was commonly articulated with the transformation of teachers' knowledge. The latter has been categorised into discrete domains for analysis including knowledge of content, pedagogy, curriculum, learners and learning, context and self (Grossman, 1989). It was classified as academic, professional and practical. Accordingly the terms “propositional”, “process” and “action” were used to illustrate their sources, nature and purposes (Clandinin and Connell, 1995). It has also been clustered according to the contexts within which knowledge was being used such as academic, school and classroom (Eraut, 1994). The articulation of discrete terms and definitions for knowledge caused considerable confusion and was sometimes impractical. In actual use, the above-mentioned discrete domains of knowledge were interwoven in practice and could seldom be clearly distinguishable.

Following Eraut (1994), the concept of “professional knowledge” was used as the major construct for looking into how the participants experienced their teacher education programme in this study. According to Eraut (1994), “professional knowledge could not be characterised in a manner that was independent of how it was learnt and how it was used. It was through looking at the contexts of its acquisition and its use and essential nature was revealed” (p.19). He further suggested that the role of teacher education was to help pre-service teachers to build up their professional knowledge. During the build-up process, the learning was not static. When the participants constructed their professional knowledge, they were actively involved in processes of cumulative acquisition, selection and interpretation of their practical experience. For example, new ideas, skills and concepts learned in the teacher education programme have to be transformed in order to become useful in contextual ways for developing the knowledge base of the profession of

PE teachers. Thus, teacher educators and the preparation programme play an important role in the transformation process of the professional knowledge.

Professional knowledge is used in this study in its fullest possible sense and includes all kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for professional performance. It is not the intention of this study to over-simplify or ignore the fundamentally complex nature of knowledge concerning PE teachers, but to enable the relationship of different types of knowledge and their significance for professional work to be discussed and analysed without being hindered by definitional issues. Moreover, the meanings of different types of knowledge are clarified and interwoven with the discussion and analysis. Accordingly, the professional learning and the kind of professional knowledge that pre-service PE teachers become socialised into would be another issues to be investigated in this study.

#### **2.5.6 The Socialising Impacts of the Field Experiences (FEs)**

Pre-Service PE teachers would be socialised into two phases of FEs in secondary schools scheduled on the 2nd and the 4th semesters. The first FE titled “the supported teaching practice” involved pre-service PE teachers in a five-week practical teaching experience in secondary schools with the help of the supporting teachers. The second FE, “the teaching practice”, lasted for eight weeks in the 4th semester before graduation.

Echoing Dodds (1989), such experience was described as the socialisation in field settings.

[It includes] all processes (some deliberate or conscious, others random or unconscious) through which trainees’ present teaching perspectives are changed through encountering people and situations in schools...such changes come from a combination of their own agency and that of others, most notably in professional teacher-training programs, their professors and on-site cooperating teachers. (p.82).

In the past decade, PE researchers have identified considerable impacts of the FE

on pre-service PE teachers (Brawdy and Byra, 1995; Curtner-Smith, 1996, Cow and Fry, 1999; Wood et al, 2000; Tinning, 2001). They were found to change their attitudes positively towards children, teaching and being teachers (O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou, 1992; Dodds, 1989). Their perceptions on teaching effectiveness (Paese, 1987) and the number and range of events observed (Bell et al, 1985) were shaped affirmatively. Their knowledge of PE (Curtner-Smith, 1996), educational ideologies (Templin 1979; 1981) and pedagogical content knowledge (Wood et al, 2000) were enhanced as the result of such experience.

The FE facilitates pre-service PE teachers' shifting of their role from that of students to teachers and it is believed that the earlier the arrangement for FE is made, the easier it is for pre-service PE teachers to make a sound decision about their occupational choice (Paese, 1987). It is also the beginning of the so called "wash-out" effect as suggested by Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981).

Studies conducted by Brunelle et al (1981); Paese (1984); Richard (1990); Jones (1992) and Hardy (1995) on pre-service PE teachers and Hynes-Dusel (1999) on seven co-operating teachers of PE confirmed the effective function of the supporting teachers and mentors perceived by the pre-service PE teachers in the FE in facilitating their professional learning. Moreover, Zimpher et al (1980) and Ocansey et al (1992) confirmed in their studies that the tutors were also significant socialising agents in helping pre-service PE teachers' professional learning in FE.

McCallister and Naper-Owen (1999) studied the observation and skills of eight pre-service PE teachers as a result of the student teaching experience. The teaching of all pre-service PE teachers was videotaped on two occasions. Immediately after these occasions, the supervising teacher and the pre-service PE teachers viewed and discussed the videotapes. Their discussions were audio-taped and analysed. The pre-service PE teachers were found to develop their observational and analysis skills and were able to reflect on their own teaching behaviours. McCallister and Naper-Owen (1999)

recommended that an early involvement of pre-service PE teachers in teaching experience and the provision of guided observations and reflections would facilitate student teachers' professional learning.

Chow and Fry (1999) investigated 120 pre-service PE teachers' perspectives on teaching practice between Hong Kong and Australia. Through questionnaire technique, they reported that the pre-service PE teachers in their study "saw more successes than difficulties in their teaching practice". They concluded, "Pre-service PE teachers seem to conform to the 'busy, happy, and good' syndrome for PE teaching and equate success with active pupil enjoyment. However, these perceptions of class enjoyment do not tend to be in much association with pupil learning, as in skill development." (p.43). There was relatively little information concerning how pre-service PE teachers actually experienced their teaching practice and shaped their professional socialisation process.

In his Master thesis, Chan (1997) made use of the questionnaire technique to explore the concerns and problems experienced by his pre-service PE teachers during field experience. The study offered important information concerning the understanding of how pre-service PE teachers perceived their particular experience of their teacher education programme and what sorts of impacts the teacher education programme had on their "teacher perspectives". These kinds of information and understanding would be pertinent to the improvement of the teacher education programme for PE teachers in Hong Kong.

Although the FE has been the focus of considerable research, pre-service PE teachers' perception of their FEs is relatively unknown. In fact, conflicting results including the negative impacts on pre-service teachers were reported by a number of studies (O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou, 1992; Askin and Imwold, 1994; Hardy 1995a; 1999; Wright, 2001). The current findings suggested that the FE lacked systematic and organised implementation, as it provided too little practical teaching experience for pre-service teachers. Moreover, there was little collaboration between the teacher training

institutes and the FE schools. Some even commented that FE might not significantly alter the strong impacts of anticipatory socialisation (Lortie, 1975; Lawson, 1983a; Allison et al, 1990) but cause pre-service PE teachers to become more negative, custodial and authoritarian (Templin, 1981).

Obviously, most of the above studies failed to attend to the dynamic, complex and multi-dimensional nature of the FE sites, the biographies of the pre-service PE teachers, the socialising impacts of the supporting teachers and the tutors. Some attempted to find answers to questions about what might lead to the improvement of FE on pre-service PE teachers' socialisation. However, Tinning (2001) criticised this emphasis by saying that, "too often, these studies employ a technicist approach in which questions of means overshadow consideration of issues relating to the purposes or ends of the educational experience" (p.14). Schempp (1985) and Placek and Dodds (1988) also suggested that if the socialisation of pre-service PE teachers was to be facilitated through teaching experience, the understanding of their conceptions and perceptions was necessary. But, how were pre-service PE teachers' teacher perspectives shaped and what happened to their particular dispositions during the time spent in the FE (Dodds 1989; O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou, 1992)? Some have suggested that more studies should focus on the nature and the processes involved in developing personal conceptions of teaching during FE (Lawson, 1983a; Graber, 1989).

In response to the above comments, the FE in this study was located with reference to the conceptions of the pre-service PE teachers. To understand the professional socialisation of pre-service PE teachers, it is necessary to examine how pre-service PE teachers interact and negotiate with various socialising experiences and agents during their socialisation in field settings. Obviously, socialising agents such as the supporting teachers, tutors and pupils bring with them a variety of orientations, intentions and behaviours that exert considerable socialising effects on pre-service PE teachers.

### **2.5.7 Socialising strategies**

During the socialisation process, pre-service PE teachers actively employ a variety of strategies when encountering the institutional expectations and values. In the study conducted by Becker et al (1961), medical students were found to actively employ a variety of means for adjusting and adapting to the domination of social situations.

Lacey (1977) identified three socialising mechanisms that teachers used to adjust to their situation. The first one was the “internalised adjustment” which was to signify individuals’ full compliance with the institutional norms. The second one was “strategic compliance” illustrating that the teachers complied with institutional norms and values because of the constraints posed by a situation, but retained oppositional beliefs. The third one was “strategic redefinition” where teachers attempted to change the situation.

Relatively little research literature exists in PE concerning the dynamic interaction of PE teachers between their own preconceived conceptions and the social constraints of their teaching contexts. Williams and Williamson (1998) in their study highlighted the conflicts and concessions that first year PE teachers experienced when encountering school culture. Most of their participants adopted the socialising strategies as suggested by Lacey (1977). They adopted the strategic compliance as the path of least resistance when dealing with conflicting professional principles. Strategic compliance was used if agreement with the views of an authority figure concerning a teaching situation occurred. PE teachers were found to change or redefine their authority’s view in order to cope with dynamic teaching situations.

Graber (1991) offered a detailed description of pre-service PE teachers’ set of behaviours employed to progress through the training programme with greater ease, more success and less effort in two teacher education courses. He termed the sets of behaviours as “studentship”. He discovered that the participants in his study consciously fronted and projected a favourable image in subtle and imaginative ways to those who controlled evaluation. Sometimes, they adjusted themselves internally by selectively choosing

aspects they wished to imitate which was closely matched with their personal teaching perspective. Some adopted the “psyching out” strategy and picked up and acted according to the emergent hints concerning the favour of their tutors.

The adoption of the socialisation strategies by the pre-service PE teachers depends on their particular settings. The above-mentioned socialising strategies adopted by pre-service PE teachers were by no means exhaustive and represented their agency in encountering their problematic educational contexts. Accordingly, how pre-service PE teachers interacted with and reacted to their dialectical socialising experiences is another area of inquiry in this study.

The review of literature concerning studies on pre-service PE teachers and their socialisation processes illustrates the need for the present study. It also helps to formulate possible areas of inquiry namely the pre-training teacher perspectives of pre-service PE teachers, their career choice, the socialisation processes when interacting with the PE teacher education programme, their socialisation strategies and agents. With the above issues in mind, the present study should make a significant contribution to the existing knowledge. It is also hoped that it will generate information and insight that will lead to the improvement of PE teacher education programmes in Hong Kong.

## **2.6 Summary**

The chapter began by presenting the historical incidents of the development of training programmes for PE teachers. The review illustrated some of the problematic situations of our local teacher preparation programmes. These programmes were launched with a physical and professional oriented curriculum. Such an apprenticeship model, with teacher educators’ practical knowledge serving as a base for the PE teacher education programme gradually developed as a theoretical and research-based academic discipline in the tertiary institutes. Along the process of development, relatively little discussion was

concerned with the issues surrounding the mode of PE teacher education programmes, the appropriate knowledge to be developed for teacher preparation programmes and its dissemination from the perspective of the pre-service PE teachers. The voice of the pre-service PE teachers was absent. The discussion of the development of PE teachers in Hong Kong offers the contextual background for the study of how pre-service PE teachers socialised themselves to become PE teachers.

The review of literature on the studies of pre-service PE teachers and their socialisation processes in Hong Kong and abroad has identified the need for further research on various areas. These include pre-service PE teachers' career choice, dispositions, orientations and expectations during the anticipatory socialisation phase, their development when encountering the institute-based and field-based teacher education programmes and their interactions and responses with their socialising agents such as their tutors and supporting teachers. It aims at generating information for a better understanding of the learning processes of the pre-service PE teachers. It is hoped to gain insights for the improvement of the training programme for PE teachers in Hong Kong. Most of important of all, they are informed by the perspectives of pre-service PE teachers.

The next chapter discusses the processes of searching for a suitable methodology for this investigation. It also provides an illustration on the reasons for adopting the interpretive research paradigm for this investigation.



## **Chapter III**

### **Methodological Framework**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a discussion of the methodology and the research design of the study. The second section focuses on the theoretical assumptions of the interpretive research paradigm adopted. It provides a rationale for selecting this paradigm based on its ability to illustrate the way meanings were generated and how the social world was viewed. The third section explains in detail the research design including the pilot study, the longitudinal type of investigation and the four phases of data collection. The use of interviews, reflective journals and critical incident reports as methods for data collection are included in the fourth section. In the fifth and sixth section, a variety of means for ensuring the credibility of this study and explicating its limitations are highlighted. The Chapter concludes with a summary section recollecting various methodological concerns in this study.

### **3.2 Methodology**

According to Guba (1990), the major differences between respective research paradigms lie with their underlying assumptions about their claims on ontology, epistemology, methodology and their perspectives on the aim and practice of understanding human action. This study examined how twenty pre-service PE teachers actively responded and gave meanings to their anticipatory and professional socialisation experiences in the context of their teacher education programme. The nature of the study is primarily qualitative. Among the available research approaches and theories, the interpretive research paradigm with its elaborated theory, phenomenological analysis (Schwandt, 2000) seems to be the most suitable one, for it seeks the understanding of the participants' experiences in a naturalistic manner. Accordingly, there are six assumptions, which originate from the interpretive research paradigm, guiding this study. They represent specific claims about the importance of interpretation and understanding, the

essence of human intention, the significance of context, the role of the researcher, the nature of reality and the notion of truth. They illustrate how social reality and everyday life of pre-service PE teachers are constituted in conversation and interaction.

### **3.2.1 The importance of interpreting and understanding**

Firstly, the interpretive research paradigm which was developed by Protestant theologians for generating textual meanings from the Bible in the seventeenth Century, has been used widely in various areas such as philosophy, history and jurisprudence (Schwandt, 2000). The focus of the paradigm was the essence of interpreting meanings of social life. The thought was elaborated by Kant, Dilthey (in Schwandt, 2000) and Weber (1964). They emphasised “verstehen” illustrating both the “descriptive” and “explanatory” understanding of meanings of social phenomena. Studies adopting the interpretive paradigm stressed the importance of understanding and interpreting processes so that the meanings of participants and the contexts can be captured, in this case, the socialisation experiences and the context behind pre-service PE teachers’ socialisation processes.

Processes of understanding and interpretation were originated from participants’ mental construction that illustrated individuals’ interpretation of the world (Schutz, 1967; Geertz, 1973). Thus, interpretivists tended to grasp how people came to interpret their own and others’ actions as meaningful and to reconstruct the meanings of action in the inter-subjective communication of individuals in the social world.

### **3.2.2 The essence of human interaction**

Secondly, to understand the meanings of human action or to say what a particular action means, required the researcher to grasp the meanings that constituted the action through words and utterance. It was mainly done through the ethnomethodological concept of “reflexivity” suggested by Potter (1996, p.47) illustrating that “descriptions are

not just merely about something but they are also doing something; that is, they are not merely representing some facet, they are also involved in that world in some practical way.” As further explained by Potter (1996, p.47), “descriptions are performed as parts of actions, which are, in turn, embedded in broader sequences of interaction.” Schwandt (2000, p.191) supports this by explaining that,

to say that human action is meaningful is to claim either that it has a certain intentional content that indicates the kind of action it is and/or that what an action means can be grasped only in terms of the system of meanings to which it belongs.

Upon understanding the system, the paradigm which stressed the understanding of human intention, was a product of individuals’ meaningful interpretations of their world. Participants actively devised their actions based on their interpretations of their socialisation events and contexts. Meaning and interpretations originated from human intention were the primary focus of the interpretivists, which gave rise to meaningful interpretations of the world. To understand how the participants gave meaning to their socialisation processes, the underlying meanings of their intention had to be understood fully.

### **3.2.3 The significance of context**

Thirdly, understanding and interpretation in this study were made through another ethnomethodological concept, “indexicality” highlighted by Potter (1996). The concept explained that the meaning of words and utterance was dependent on its context. The knowledge of pre-service PE teachers’ culture that influenced their learning-to-teach processes was also important in understanding their socialisation processes in context. The participants’ culture was a shared system of meanings that they learnt, modified, maintained and defined in the context of PE. Consequently, understanding the influence of the culture on the participants’ socialisation processes in Hong Kong provided the

context in which their realities were built and meanings were constructed. In this sense, meaning production could not be considered individual, but emerged from negotiations between individuals in a society.

#### **3.2.4 The role of the researcher**

Fourthly, for Dilthey (in Schwandt, 2000) and Weber (1947), the method of “verstehen” involved one having to place oneself in the role of the actor to take into account the way in which individuals attached subjective meaning to situations and orientated their actions. Accordingly, one has to involve oneself in the hermeneutic circle during the meaning-making process. Dilthey (in Sparkes 1992) indicated that the meaning-making process required a constant movement of interplay between individual expression and the context essential for any interpretation to take place. In other words, any meaning generated from socialisation of the participants was the product of “double hermeneutic” illustrating interpretive movement between parts and the whole. The involvement in the second-order interpretations of the previous ones in a retrospective back and forth manner initiated by the researcher might provide powerful insights for generating meanings of participants’ socialisation in this study. This illustrated the importance of the role and involvement of the researcher in the research process. An intense interactive and personal process of engagement relies on the researcher’s social skills and creative capacities. Thus, the separation between the researcher as the knower and the process of knowing (as most of researchers did in the qualitative studies to justify the criterion of objectivity) seemed to be impossible.

#### **3.2.5 The nature of reality**

Fifthly, it was argued that the interpretive processes were “the product of mind” involving inter-subjectivity meanings of the researcher and the participants being explicit. The basic assumption was that the world was only “real” so far as the participants and the

researcher defined it as such. In other words, the reality depended on the meaning and interpretations that participants derived from their socialisation experiences. Such experiences required their mental constructions for organising their interpretations of the social world. Different participants experienced and interpreted their world differently and thus their reality was considered as subjective in accordance with their mental constructions.

### **3.2.6 The notion of truth**

Finally, it was assumed that through inter-subjective interactions, the researcher and the participants developed and negotiated shared understanding concerning pre-service PE teachers' socialisation experiences. It represented a particular kind meaningful interpretation of the world. Knowledge produced as such was a kind of human meaning which was subjective and based on experience (Sparkes, 1992; Bleicher, 1982). Interpretivists neither view individual mental constructions as true or false nor make claims about their correctness.

The above assumptions of the interpretive research paradigm serve as an "interpretive frame" which provides the basic belief system for seeing the world and guiding this research. With such particular beliefs and assumptions, it should be capable of describing analytically the participants' dynamic socialisation processes in the real-life context.

The study intended to provide rich and detailed accounts from the perspectives of the participants and aimed to generate insights into what actually occurred during their learning-to-teach processes. During the investigation, the researcher inquired and recorded data from various sources and synthesised them in such ways that the complexity of the phenomena could be authentically and thoroughly represented. The focus is to generate understanding that can serve as a basis for improving future practices in the programmes for preparing PE teachers in the Hong Kong Institute of Education.

### **3.3 The Research Design**

After confirming the methodology, a pilot study was designed and conducted with the primary purpose of going through the whole research processes which included planning, communicating, negotiating entry and establishing contracts with the target students to identify (as research participants) the necessary improvement measures needed for conducting the actual investigation. Other related purposes included the trying out of the interview and reflective journal as methods for data collection and familiarisation with the skills of transcribing and coding.

A sample of 10 pre-service PE teachers who had just completed their first FE (field experience) was invited to participate in the pilot study. The number of participants equalled to 25% of the total number of pre-service teachers taking the programme. A careful selection of the participants based on different background factors, namely age, gender and residential areas. The levels of sports skill proficiency were also taken into consideration. In Hong Kong, the accommodations and residential areas could reflect participants' socio-economic backgrounds, and space and facilities available for sports activities. The target sample included 7 males and 3 females aged between 19 and 22. This was representative of the ratio of age and gender distribution of pre-service PE teachers enrolled in the teacher education course. Therefore, it was believed that these ten participants could suitably represent the characteristics of all pre-service PE teachers in the Institute. This careful sampling aimed at collecting saturated and representative data of the pre-service PE teachers. The first FE was chosen because it represented an important component of the teacher preparation programme. The detailed characteristics of the sample for the pilot study are given in Appendix 6.

Each of the participants was briefed in detail about the purposes of the pilot study and their rights. They were given the guarantee that their participation would be kept confidential and their names would not be disclosed. Upon confirming their consent and

acceptance, they were invited to sign a consent form (Appendix 7).

Interviewing and the use of reflective journals were chosen as instruments for data collection in this research and their feasibility was tested in the pilot study. Each participant was then invited to have a taped interview in the researcher's office at his or her convenience. Following Byra and Karp (2000), the interview was simply defined here, as an interactive research tool. A face-to-face verbal interaction with the participants was adopted for collecting relevant information. An interview guide (Appendix 8) recommended by Patton (2002) was used. It served as a checklist to ensure that not any of the questions planned would be omitted.

Having reciprocal empathy between the interviewer and the interviewees would be a great help in exploring the participants' world. It involved a "give and take", mutual negotiation of meaning and power between the interviewer and the interviewees. Issues of how to sequence different types of questions during an interview were explored. The interview began with some questions concerning the interviewees' background and experiences. They included seeking information about their FE schools, classes and the content taught. Questions of this kind were found to be helpful in situating participants to the later reflective and critical questions, which demanded their reflection on the meanings of their experiences. They had to review their recent teaching experiences in detail and develop future directions. Some typical questions were: "What are the functions and values of early field experience? What have you learnt in your field experience? How do you perceive your strengths and weaknesses? What are your future plans?".

Both tape recording and note taking were used during the interview. Tape recording was extremely useful for it recorded everything in the interview. The interviewer could engage fully in asking questions and obtaining participants' information concerning their experiences, feelings and comments on their FE. What was recorded served as hard data as compared with those generated from the "observational inventories" or "questionnaire



replies”. They were permanent records that were available for self-analysis or to be re-examined by other researchers for validation. Note taking was also found useful as the interviewer could keep track of significant remarks that the participants had made which could be referred to at the appropriate time. Special incidents and particular responses, including significant non-verbal elements during interaction, would also be recorded for future analysis. Patton (2002) suggested that regardless of the circumstances, the interviewer should take notes promptly. He should try to be as inconspicuous as possible during note taking, and then analyse the notes frequently.

Reflective journal was used as another technique for data collection. The reflective journal (Appendix 9) was delivered to each of the participant before the interview. The participants could work out the journal entries on their own. The entries served as the practical reflection on their learning-to-teach experience. There were guiding questions to help them to recall and reflect on their experiential events in the field settings. They were asked to recall their successful and unsuccessful teaching experiences and the difficulties they had encountered. Apart from being asked to comment on the help that they had received from their tutors and supporting teachers, they were also required to reflect on their teaching experience and identify their strength and weaknesses. After that, they were requested to project their beliefs about the value of the field experience and their future expectations. This kind of written information might be regarded as a primary source representing the participants’ experience, reactions, feelings and reflection. It was more likely to be an accurate representation of their “inside” stories including their past, present and future occurrences in their memories. The method had been used extensively by a number of researchers for the study of the socialisation experiences of pre-service PE teachers (Solomon et al, 1990; Curtner-Smith, 2001; McCullick, 2001). As indicated by Solomon et al (1990), the reflective journals not only served the communication function, but also conveyed practical and social impacts. The reflective journals in this study were

the mediating source of information and served as the substitution for direct observation of the participants' behaviour.

When data collection of the pilot study was completed, a sharing session with all the participants for evaluation was held. The following feedback was received and incorporated into the design of the main study: Firstly, the researcher's office was not an ideal place for interviewing because it was too close to the offices of the other tutors. The participants found the environment slightly threatening especially when they had to answer questions relating to the support offered to them by tutors during their field experience. Some of them stated that they would prefer a comfortable common room, which was distant from the researcher's office because they would feel more at ease in expressing themselves. Secondly, some of them found that the presence of the cassette recorder was threatening too, as it would be a permanent record of everything they had said. Consequently, the participants in the main study were told clearly about the objectives of the interview and the purpose of the cassette recording at the beginning of their interview. Thirdly, sometimes, the researcher himself might create the "obstructive" and "threatening" environment for the participants, as they had to sit face to face with their tutor. Developing a close rapport with the participants was found to be essential. Furthermore, a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity should be given so that the interview process could be based on trust.

The basic assumption of the interpretive research carried out was that it was important for the researcher to be able to put himself in the participants' position and attempt to view things from their perspective. The researcher had to be very careful to cultivate a sensitive relationship with the participants. Participants should not be placed into the "threatening" and "stressful" situations when they were talking about their experiences of failure, humiliation and loss of self-esteem. It was also decided that after each data collection phase, the participants should be given opportunities to give

comments and feedback in the meetings. They would be frank about their thoughts and feelings once a good relationship had been established.

A critical review of the pilot study confirmed that the interviews and reflective journals could effectively detect the participants' interpretations of their experience of FE. However, the remarks made in the reflective journals were found to be superficial. The actual study would need to be supplemented by a critical incident technique. Flanagan (1954) described the critical incident that the technique would be "a method of studying activity" (p.335) and primarily used by psychologists in order to determine and predict human behaviours. Flanagan (1954) concluded that the technique was, nonetheless, available for a wider application by saying that, "the collection and tabulation of these observations make it [critical incident technique] possible to formulate the critical requirements of an activity [a job or an act]" (p.335). However, using the technique alone might pose difficulties in determining a wide variety of personal and contextual factors. The incorporation of the critical incidents in their reflective journals would facilitate the collection of specific and notable incidents in particular phases of the investigation.

In the main study, the sample of ten participants, 25% of the cohort that participated in the pilot was increased to 50% of the cohort. This enabled participants with special backgrounds such as their pre-training sports participation and particular types of secondary schools to be included in the sample. Such practice would ensure the collection of saturated and representative data.

Other measures taken to improve the research design included modifying the schedule for interview. It became apparent that it should not be too tight. The interviewer would become tired and bored after lengthy talking. Thus, it seemed to be advisable to arrange not more than three interviews a day. The researcher's familiarity with the context triggered an almost irrepressible personal judgement and response to participants' remarks. This might pose a possible threat to the acceptance of the participants' accounts.

The researcher's questioning technique was the reason. The researcher needed to realize that his job was solely to elicit information rather than offering solutions or comments to participants' remarks. Measures such as asking the participants to verify their accounts and ensuring the coding reproducibility for the authenticity and accuracy of the data might be necessary.

The processes of data transcription, coding and categorising for the pilot study were completed accordingly. The findings revealed that meaningful insights could be generated from the transcripts. They illustrated perceptions and conceptions that the participants gained from their first FE. They conveyed positive remarks concerning their professional learning from their FE experience. Findings included their expectations about their relationship with their tutors and supporting teachers before and during their FE. More support obtained from the supporting teachers than from their tutors was highlighted as a factor. However, they questioned the timing of arranging such experience during their teacher education programme. They felt that they were not well prepared for their FE. The participants were found to have their own teaching styles, which were greatly influenced by their biographies. Meaningful conceptions of the participants' teacher perspectives on the socialisation process also emerged. It was found that they socialised individually concerning their practical teaching experiences. They started by gaining the acceptance of their pupils, implementing their teaching assignments and finally focused on the learning of their pupils (a summary of the major findings of the pilot study is included in Appendix 10). The pilot study demonstrated the direction in which the first FE could be considered as a possible phase of study. In return, pre-service PE teachers' socialisation could possibly be studied longitudinally across distinctive phases of their programme.

Accordingly, the main study was conducted as a longitudinal inquiry of the development of the pre-service socialisation process of PE teachers. Mednick et al (1994) defined longitudinal research simply as "enquiring into some assessment of subjects from

a defined population at a minimum of two points in their lives” (p.4). This study started from the time when the participants joined their two-year teacher education programme up to their graduation. It was cumulative and sequential in nature and facilitated the understanding of the developmental changes in their teacher perspectives.

A detailed analysis of the content of the PE teacher education programme identifies a series of foci of pre-service PE teachers’ professional development. The series were possible phases of study concerning the development of pre-service teachers’ socialization processes. During the first phase, the participants’ biographies including their career choice were collected. Their perceptions on the subject of PE teachers and teaching were investigated. These were then utilised as baseline data for comparing and contrasting information obtained in the subsequent phases. Thus, the changes and development of their teacher perspectives when interacting with the teacher education programme, the first field experience and the teaching practice were the phase two, three and four of data collection respectively. The details of the four phases, schedules of data collection and sets of issues for exploration can be found in Table 1:

Phases No.	Phases	Schedules of Data Collection	Major Issues to be studied	Course Time Denoted
1	Pre-training	Beginning of Course (The First Month Of the Course)	Pre-training teaching perspectives	Beginning of the Course. (Beginning of the First Semester.
2	Professional Orientation	The end of the Sixth Month of the course.	Physical Education Teacher Education Programme	First six months of study. (Completion of the First Semester)
3	First School Experience	The End of the First Year Study	First School Experience	The first year study. (Completion of the Second Semester)
4	Professional Reorientation	The end of Study and Towards Graduation	Physical Education Teacher Education Programme and Second Field Experience	The whole second year study. (Completion of Semester 3 and Semester 4)

Table 1: Details of the four phases of data collection

The pilot study helped to formulate and generate different categories on the selection of the sample groups. It helped to relate categories to each other and to their properties. A “stratified sample” technique suggested by Cohen and Manion (1994) was

used in his study. It deliberately selected heterogeneous groups to observe the commonalities in the changes in their socialisation processes. Twenty pre-service PE teachers with 15 males and 5 females were invited to participate in the study. Their ages were between 18 and 23. The sample size and the age range were considered as representative. They lived in different residential areas, were involved in varying degrees of sports participation during their school years in different types of secondary schools and possessed different levels of skill proficiency obtained in their sports skill admission tests (The characteristics of the sample for the main study is included in Appendix 11). Thus, significant patterns of commonalities existed across the pre-service PE teachers throughout their socialisation process. Moreover, high quality case descriptions that were useful for documenting uniqueness could be obtained.

### **3.4 Methods of Data Collection**

Based on the result of the pilot study, three types of data collection methods namely interviewing, reflective journals and critical incident technique were adopted. The use of different means of data collection was considered to be a powerful mechanism for insuring greater credibility and accuracy of the results. The use of multi-strategies was aimed at detecting various layers of information concerning the socialisation of the pre-service PE teachers.

Interview was used as the main data collection method in this study for it was versatile and flexible. Four phases of interview were conducted. Each interview was about 30 to 45 minutes in length. The interviews conducted were used for collecting useful data on each participant's whole pre-service socialisation process. The duration of each interview was thought to be suitable to collect all the necessary information as well as to maintain the participants' concentration.

During the interview, an "interview guide" recommended by Patton (2002) was

adopted. However, there was no particular order of the topics to be investigated and the actual wordings of the questions were not fixed in advance. Thus, the interviewer could speak freely on any particular subject area and select words for questions spontaneously. The intention was to produce situated understandings grounded in specific interaction episodes. The interview was interactive and matched with the essence of the hermeneutical approach for exploring the interviewee's "world".

Patton (2002) illustrated that there were definite advantages of using the interview approach. First, the duration of each interview could be easily controlled. Second, the interviews became more systematic and comprehensive each time for the interviewer gained experiences and learned to tackle the important and worthwhile issues that needed to be explored and followed. Third, it provided a framework within which the interviewer could develop the questions of inquiry and arrange them sequentially. The interviewer could also make decisions concerning which types of information should be pursued in greater depth. Lastly, logical gaps in data could be anticipated and filled in.

However, it emerged that there were some limitations in using the interviewing method for collecting data. No participants could be treated exactly alike for they were different individuals. They were not equally communicative, perceptive and reflective during the interview. Thus, the familiarity with the interviewing techniques gained from the pilot study was decisive in this study.

Reflective journals and critical incident technique were the other methods used to collect data in this study. The participants were asked to write a reflective journal in each phase of the data collection after the interview. There were guiding questions to help the participants to recall and reflect on their experiential events and socialisation issues. For example, in the first phase of data collection, they were asked to recall how and why they joined the teacher education programme. The teaching modules including the detailed content they had attended and respective comments would be asked in the second study phase. In the third phase of the data collection, the classes and topics that they had taught

would be further inquired into. They were also required to reflect on their teaching. After that, they were requested to project their beliefs about the characteristics of a PE teacher and their expectations of their coming PE courses. This kind of written information was regarded as the primary source representing the participants' experience, reactions, feelings and reflection on their actions.

Apart from the reflective journals, the critical incident technique was employed to detect particular issues that the participants attended to as significant incidents during their socialisation process. The results of the pilot study suggested that the critical incident technique could serve as a supplementary tool that would stimulate the participants to identify the "why", "how", and "what" of their significant socialisation incidents. It was used in the form of stimulating questions incorporated within the reflective journals to decontextualise the participants' possible socialising agents, events and experiences. For example, the participants were asked to recall their successful and unsuccessful incidents concerning PE in their school days, the notable activities and content in each module of their teacher education programme, the successful and unsuccessful experiences in their field experiences throughout the four study phases.

Reflective journals and critical incident technique can be regarded as powerful tools which are widely used by educational researchers for data collection. The techniques were becoming more popular in the field of research in PE as "non-interactive techniques" to amplify or disconfirm the interpretation of data derived from interviews (Askins and Imwold, 1994; Curtner-Smith, 1996; Byra and Karp, 2000). They were found to be practical because the participants were only required to complete the journals at their own pace and in their own time. Thus, their responses would be more genuine and authentic. With the three data collection techniques, a considerable range of information concerning various aspects of the participants' actions and perceptions during their socialisation process could be gathered. The participants were provided with opportunities to comment on the data collected through each instrument used.



The data arising from the interviews and reflective journals were transcribed, coded and organised. An analytic induction and content analysis (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, Patton, 2002) were used in the data management and meaning making processes. Analytic induction required the scanning of transcribed scripts for patterns and themes (Patton 2002). During the process, phenomena were categorised and sorted out as intensively as possible for generating concepts. Possible themes were carefully identified and formed through content analysis. To refine the themes such as the participants' characteristics, career choice, professional conceptions, socialising strategies and agents, the transcribed scripts were continuously reviewed afterwards for concepts and themes until the theories were grounded (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Constant comparison, as explained by Glaser and Strauss (1967) combined inductive analysis with a simultaneous comparison of all social incidents. Accordingly, participants' knowledge of the PE teacher education programme and their understanding of the contextual information such as the culture of PE teaching in school were considered. Emerging and recurring themes were then reviewed and compared constantly among and across cases in a back and forth manner to establish categories. Strauss and Cobin (1998) stated "categories are concepts, derived from data, ...stand for phenomena...Grouping concepts into categories is important because it enables the analyst to reduce the number of units with which he or she is working" (p.113-114). In addition, categories are effective because they have the potential to explain and predict the participants' feelings and actions in their socialisation processes. In this study, subcategories such as participants with orientations towards "coaching", "teaching affinity", "pragmatic considerations", "apprehensiveness" and "an easy going style" were grouped for analysis. The data analysis process aimed at providing an understanding of the development of the participants' perspectives prior to, during and at the end of their teacher education programme.

### **3.5 Credibility of the Study**

Validity, reliability and objectivity are normally viewed differently within the qualitative research design. This study adopted the interpretive research paradigm and hence, the researcher's pre-occupation, understanding and professional judgements were acknowledged for generating meanings throughout the research process. Strauss and Cobin (1998) indicated that every mode of discovery developed its own standards and procedures for achieving them. The following conceptions and measures were taken and integrated into the research process in order to ensure the credibility of the study.

This study made use of "conceptual density" as a justification for the notion of "plausibility of accounts" as recommended by Layder (1993). The major purpose of this research was to contribute to the identification of the pre-training socialization characteristics of the participants and their occupational socialization experiences. It aimed at generating useful information that would lead to improve the quality of the training programme for PE teachers. The main emphasis was to collect and generate rich accounts of the participants' learning-to-teach processes empirically. The research process involved robust interpretation and explanation based on the data.

Moreover, methodological means were also taken to ensure the "trustworthiness" and "authenticity" of the data, which in turn, established credibility and legitimacy of this research (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Data in the form of direct quotations from the participants would be used to ensure authenticity. As far as possible, the participants' own words were used when describing their meanings and intentions for developing the major themes and categories. Translation of the participants' scripts of interviews, reflective journal and critical incidents was undertaken by a PE professional, a colleague of the researcher with twelve-year experience of training PE teachers. Thus she had adequate knowledge and contextual familiarity with the pre-service PE teachers. Moreover, the transcripts in English were given back to each participant for cross-checking. It was

assumed that the participants should have basic literacy in reading the transcripts because they had to obtain the minimum of a pass in the English language in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination before being admitted to the Institute. Furthermore, explanation of the transcripts was offered to them individually. This was to ensure that the transcripts were authentic description of their responses. In one case, a request was made to listen to the tape. Amendments to the comments about the participant's secondary school PE teacher were made accordingly, after the verification. It was through such processes that the authenticity of the data was guaranteed.

Strauss and Cobin (1998) suggested that assuming a similar set of conditions, other researchers should be able to come up with similar theoretical explanations from the data analysis. In this study, the trustworthiness of the data as well as the analysis was ensured through introducing the mechanism of "peer debriefers". Two colleagues were invited to serve as the peer debriefers (henceforth called debriefer 1 and 2). Debiefer 1 was an experienced colleague from the Department of Educational Studies who had been involved in the training of teachers for fourteen years. He had enrolled in the Ph.D. Programme with "the home school partnership" as his research focus. Debiefer 2 was one of the PE colleagues with five years of teacher training experience. She had enrolled in the Ph.D. Programme with "pre-primary physical education" as her research focus. They were chosen because they had used the qualitative inquiry as their research methodology and thus were familiar with generating meanings from transcribed texts.

After interviewing, the researcher discussed the research process with the peer debriefers to obtain their comments on emerging themes and clarification of respective perceptions. It ensured that the analysis was focused on the research questions and avoided discussion of unrelated topics resulting from being overly involved engagement with the participants. The journal was available for the peer to review at any time.

Five interview transcripts, which had been coded from different participants grouped under the categories of orientations towards "coaching", "teaching affinity",

“apprehensiveness”, “pragmatic considerations” and “an easy-going type”, were selected for the inter-coding exercise. The scripts represented 25% of the total data collected in phase one. They were selected because they were relatively short length. The peer debriefers did not have to spend too much time on the task. It was explained to them that the objectives of coding were to search for the possible grouping and characteristics of the participants and their respective teacher perspectives.

A sharing session was held afterwards to evaluate the results of the coding with the peer debriefers. Reasons why and how the participants were categorised from the five sample scripts were discussed. It was found that similar categorisation resulted although different terms were suggested by the two debriefers as illustrated in Table 2 below.

	<b>Original coding</b>	<b>Debriefers 1</b>	<b>Debriefers 2</b>
Sample script 1	Orientation towards Coaching	Sportsmen	Athletes
Sample script 2	Orientation towards Teaching affinity	Idealists	Idealists
Sample script 3	Orientation towards Pragmatic consideration	Practical type	Pragmatists
Sample script 4	Orientation towards an easy going type	Easy going type	Followers
Sample script 5	Orientation towards apprehensiveness	Shaky type	Physically weak recruits

Table 2: The commonality of data analysis of “different groups of the participants” identified by different coders in the phase one.

Similar methods were used to cross check the data analysis of the “curriculum expectations” in phase two, “professional conceptions” in phase three and “socialising strategies” in phase four. These illustrated similar interpretations although different wordings and descriptions were found. The details of the analysis are given in the following three tables (Tables 3 to 5) for illustration:

	Groups of participants	Original coding	Debriefers 1	Debriefers 2
Sample script 1	Orientation towards Coaching	Practical training, competitions and performance	Experiences similar to being an athlete	Sports experiences
Sample script 2	Orientation towards Teaching affinity	Practical and theoretical professional learning experience	Any, experiences with learning opportunities	All kinds of learning experiences
Sample script 3	Orientation towards Pragmatic consideration	Practical experiences identical to their future teaching	Experiences of teachers' work	Pedagogical experiences
Sample script 4	Orientation towards an easy going type	Practical experience	Any experiences as far as they are practical	Knowing the sports and games
Sample script 5	Orientation towards apprehensiveness	Practical experiences with fun and enjoyable learning atmosphere	Any experiences as far as they are enjoyable	Experiences with fun

Table 3: The commonality of data analysis on the “curriculum expectations” of different groups of participants identified by two coders in phase two.

	Groups of participants	Original coding	Debriefers 1	Debriefers 2
Sample script 1	Orientation towards Coaching	Bringing fun and enjoyment to pupils	Promoting happiness to pupils	Promoting enjoyment through PE
Sample script 2	Orientation towards Teaching affinity	Promoting pupils' Learning	Promoting learning	Teaching something for pupils
Sample script 3	Orientation towards Pragmatic consideration	Managing the pupils	Maintaining class discipline was important	Maintaining order was important
Sample script 4	Orientation towards an easy going type	Establishing good relationship with the pupils	Social relationship	Getting along with the pupils was important
Sample script 5	Orientation towards apprehensiveness	Being liked by the pupils	Pleasing the pupils	Pleasing the pupils

Table 4: The commonality of the data analysis concerning “professional conceptions” of different groups of participants identified by two coders in phase three.

	Groups of participants	Original coding	Debrief 1	Debrief 2
Sample script 1	Orientation towards Coaching	A variety of socialising strategies	Improving teaching, Reflection, Modelling,	Improving teaching, Reflective teaching, Demonstration
Sample script 2	Orientation towards Teaching affinity	Reflecting on their practices and adopting a variety of strategies	Positive, Improving teaching, Holding pupils responsible for their learning, Democratic.	Positive in dealing with pupils, Improving teaching, Sharing the responsibilities with pupils, Democratic
Sample script 3	Orientation towards Pragmatic consideration	Complaining, Blaming others, Controlling pupils, Improving teaching	Defensive strategies such as complaining and maintaining laws and order, Improving teaching	Defensive strategies in maintaining discipline of the class, Improving teaching and learning
Sample script 4	Orientation towards an easy going type	Conforming, Reconciling, A variety of ways in tackling their teaching problems	Conforming with the tutors, Complying with pupils, Improving teaching	Pleasing tutors and pupils
Sample script 5	Orientation towards apprehensiveness	Compromising and Complying	Pleasing everybody in order to survive	Pleasing tutors and pupils

Table 5: The commonality of the data analysis concerning “socialising strategies” of different groups of participants identified by two coders in phase four.

Denzin (1989) and Patton (2002) recommended that for any research design, it is vitally important to have a process of “triangulation” for generating broad, thick, deep and thus “fully grounded interpretations”. Denzin (1989, p.25) explained clearly the underlying meaning of triangulation:

no single [research] method adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors...[nor] will it permit an investigator to develop causal propositions free of rival interpretations...Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed. This is termed triangulation.

Patton (2002) also argued that triangulation enabled researchers to more than one dimension of looking at their study and helped to minimise personal and intrinsic bias as caused by unexpected causal factors and propositions. It served to improve the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings.

In this study, triangulation was considered and implemented on a reasonable and practical basis. The reflective journals and critical incident analysis were used for cross-checking and validating the accounts given by the participants during the interviews. Such a method was similar to what Denzin (1989) has called, the “between” or “cross-method” triangulation. “The rationale for this strategy is that the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another; and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each while overcoming their unique deficiencies” (Denzin, 1989, p.244). The interviews might be subject to distortion due to the participants’ personal bias, anxiety, politics or lacking of awareness. However, the method allowed the inter-subjective meanings of the researcher and the participants to be investigated in a wider and deeper way. Reflective journals and critical incident technique are highly variable in quality for they might contain great detail in some cases but very little or nothing in others. However, they might reveal very different stories from the participants that could not be detected in the interview. By using a variety of data sources, the strengths of each type of data collection could be built on for generating meanings while minimising the weaknesses of each single method.

The logic of the methodology started with the adoption of the qualitative approach and the interpretive research paradigm for generating meanings. It was followed by the design and conduct of the pilot study, the longitudinal type of investigation and the four phases of study for detecting the socialisation processes of the pre-service PE teachers. The methodology and research design adopted in this study involved a logical and coherent process which is based on an inductive approach. The analysis would be grounded in the content of the qualitative data. Moreover, this study covered largely the processes of “how” the participants socialised themselves to become PE teachers.

The sample of this study was deliberately selected according to different categories such as gender, age, skill levels and residential locations. By collecting data sources in the socialisation phases of each participant, the concepts that were in common in terms of

groups, time and space could be detected. Similarly, the unique features of these concepts were studied in relation to different contextual environments. The intention was to search for different data sources in order to compare the individuals or groups.

Through such processes, multiple perceptions could be generated to clarify meaning and verify the repeatability of the interpretation. Cross-referencing among the information collected by different methods for testing its consistency and mingling the data for identifying discrepancies were also possible. It was hoped that through such measures of checking, the accounts obtained from the participants could become more credible and acceptable.

During the research process, the researcher endeavoured to show his sincerity and respect for the participants' dignity and rights while engaging in the pursuit of lived experiences of pre-service PE teachers' socialisation processes. The researcher had kept in mind the obligations he owed to those whom he studied. The welfare of the participants should always be of concern. Respect and trust were earned from the participants. The interviews were neither coercive nor deceptive.

To negotiate access to the participants, obtaining their consent was ethically and methodologically necessary. They were approached and had the details of the project and their rights and obligations explained to them. Subsequently, an informed consent form was designed to protect the participants' rights and to reduce the possibility of litigation against the researcher (Appendix 7).

It was deemed essential to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Sensitive information was protected through security and non-referential coding of data. Measures were also taken with regard to the setting of this research and the way the results were disseminated. Each of the participants was given a pseudo name so that his or her true identity was protected. The pseudo names were in the forms of common Chinese surnames such as Chan, Leung, Lai, Lung, Siu, Kwan and Ho and the



first names like Hung, Hang, Chung, Yan, Kuen, Man, Tung, To, Sim, Fai, Kin, Shing and Kai. These names were so common that the identities of the participants were difficult to be spotted. Some other ethical undertakings were used throughout the research. Firstly, there were mechanisms for the participants to speak up whenever and wherever they wished and critical comments were encouraged. Secondly, it was the researcher's responsibility to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants throughout the project by utilising adequate security measures. Thirdly, the authentic meanings of the participants were ensured by means of host verification before incorporating it as evidence. Fourthly, stories from the participants were taken as verifiable.

### **3.6 Limitations of the Study**

It should be noted that this study involved a sample of only twenty pre-service PE teachers and the findings were primarily context specific. The spectrum of background of the sample was fairly narrow. It was restricted to the pre-service PE teachers who had taken the two-year full-time course of teacher education in the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Inevitably, the pre-service socialisation would have been influenced by this particular context. However, it is illuminative as it is the study of human experience of the learning-to-teach processes of pre-service PE teachers. The written report from this study contains detailed information regarding the pre-service PE teachers' characteristics, experiences of the PE teacher education modules and the field experiences, socialising processes, strategies and agents. Transferability of the findings may be possible across similar research questions, participants, contexts and settings.

This study presents the status of a teacher education programme for PE teachers in the last quarter of the 1990s in Hong Kong. It should be noted that programmes of professional preparation of PE teachers have undergone considerable changes to meet the current needs of social development. Therefore, the latest changes of the teacher

preparation programme need to be duly noted.

Strategies reported in this study were largely based on the verbal and written reports of the participants. Thus, they relied much on the participants' awareness and capability of memory. Efforts were made and care was taken in order not to influence the participants' responses during the data collection processes. Mechanisms were also put in place to ensure participants' authentic responses during the meaning-making processes. It is acknowledged, however, that the researcher's ability in reviewing the information and articulation may have affected the quality of the data. Moreover, information presented in the informed consent form and the reflective journals may have alerted the participants to focus on particular types of concern, which may influence their subsequent behaviours.

### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter has presented the methodological framework of the study. It has sought to explain why and how the interpretive research paradigm and its associated theoretical assumption for generating meanings has been adopted. Accordingly, they serve as the basis for conducting the pilot study and the main longitudinal inquiry. The use of the interview, reflective journal and critical incident technique as methods for data collection, the credibility and limitation issues of this study are also discussed. The following chapters present the four data analysis phases of this study. They include "the pre-training phase", illustrating the participants' biographies, career choice and the kind of teacher perspectives they possessed before joining the teacher education programme. Results generated in the pre-training phase serve as baseline data for comparing and contrasting information obtained in subsequent socialisation phases namely the professional orientation, the first school experience and the professional reorientation phases.

## **Chapter IV**

### **The Pre-training Phase**

## **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data analysis arising from the first phase of the study. This phase is called the pre-training phase. It shares a similar meaning with the anticipatory socialisation period (Lortie 1975) and the recruitment phase (Dewar 1989) that signifies the period prior to any formal teacher training. During this phase, an attempt is made to decontextualise the biographies of the participants.

Following this introduction section, the second section describes how the participants are being clustered into five groups in accordance with their fundamental orientations, attitudinal dispositions and physical attributes for analysis. This is followed by a discussion of the cross-case analysis concerning three emerging themes, namely career choice, perceived characteristics of a good PE teacher, and their experiences concerning PE. It ends with a summary illustrating the origin of participants' anticipatory socialisation, identifying the possible implications and serving as yardsticks for future development and comparison in the subsequent data analyses.

## **4.2 Data Collection, Analysis and the Grouping of Participants for Analysis**

Data from twenty pre-service PE teachers were collected during the first month of joining their teacher education programme through interviewing and writing of the reflective journals. All participants had a 30-45 minute interview individually. After the interview, they were required to fill in the reflective journals in their own time. They were asked about the origin, influences and contextual constraints concerning their career choice and their conceptions of PE and PE teachers. Samples of the reflective journal and the interview are attached in Appendix 12 and 13.

The data were initially coded and organised through content analysis. Preliminary data analysis from the scripts of the interviews and reflective journals revealed that the participants included fifteen males and five females. Most of them were fresh graduates

from secondary school and three of them had graduated one year earlier. One of them had spent a year at a nursing school, another worked as an office assistant and the third was looking for a job before joining the Institute. Among all participants, only one had been accepted by a local university but had decided to take the teacher training course instead. The remainder had tried to get a university place but were unsuccessful because of their relatively low academic results obtained in the A-level examination.

Through constant comparison, it was discovered that there were common phenomena among groups of participants concerning their physical attributes, attitudinal characteristics, reasons for joining the teaching education programme, conceptions of PE and PE teachers. Five groups of participants with orientations towards “coaching”, “teaching affinity”, “apprehensiveness”, “pragmatic consideration” and “easy-going style” emerged from the data. They possessed different levels of sports skill proficiency, ranging from good to weak, demonstrated varying degrees of confidence to become PE teachers, had different reasons of wanting to become PE teachers and exhibited different conceptions about PE and PE teachers.

Before discussing further the data analysis of this study phase, it should be noted that the scripts of the interviews and reflective journals would be used and quoted to describe participants’ meanings and intentions in an intermingled way so that participants’ teacher perspectives could be presented thoroughly. The following is a detailed analysis of the five groups of participants:

#### **Group 1: Participants with an orientation towards coaching**

As shown in the interview scripts, three participants, Chung(M), To(M) and Lai(F) were national athletes who represented Hong Kong in basketball and athletics respectively. They had received substantial sports training and gained extensive competition experiences before they joined the teacher education programme. As the privileged group nurtured in a sports environment and being high achievers in sports

performance, they appeared to have very strong beliefs and preconceptions driven by an achievement orientation. To become a qualified teacher was only their “career contingency”. They felt that it would give them security because they would have a relatively high and stable income and possess additional qualifications as “coaches” at the same time. An analysis of the three participants yields the following basic portraits:

#### Chung(M) (Case 3)

Chung was a twenty-two year old athlete who immigrated to Hong Kong from the Mainland when he was three. He was selected as a member of the Hong Kong Youth Basketball Team when he was in Form 6. He gained a great deal of satisfaction by participating in basketball matches and enjoyed the kind of heroic and euphoric sensation generated from the crowd and his supporters. He said in the interview:

When I was in the secondary school, I was the member of the basketball team. I learnt a lot of skills and tactics from a number of coaches. Eventually, I was selected to be the member of the Hong Kong Youth Squad Team. I was happy and had a sense of achievement when everyone there yelled and clapped because of my good shot. (Chung)

Chung’s inclination towards hero-worship drove him to try hard and to avoid failure.

He said, “I’ll try to avoid getting myself into any of the unsuccessful incidents. I never do anything that will bring failure or loss.”

#### To(M) (Case 5)

To was twenty years old. He was an active young man who came from a middle class family. He was a hurdler of the Hong Kong Athletics Team. He took his coach as his role model and decided to become a PE teacher. However, to become a national coach had always been his ambition and being a PE teacher was only a stepping-stone to

making his dream come true. In the interview, he said, “I think that a PE teacher is a hero... He must be fit and strong...His physical appearance is an important element. He should be recognisable as a PE teacher at first sight.”

#### Lai(F) (Case 20)

Lai was nineteen. She was young and keen on sports. She graduated from a secondary school for pupils with talent in sports. She came from a middle class family and had once been a junior squad member of the Hong Kong Women’s Basketball Team. Her career choice was very much influenced by her basketball coach. In the interview, she reflected, “I decided to become a PE teacher when I was in Form two. I wanted to be a coach because I met a very good coach at that time. Not only did she teach us how to play the game, but also treated us as her children.” When being asked to articulate the characteristics of a good PE teacher, she commented, “Just like my coach. She should teach her students how to play (basketball) as well as how to behave. She should talk to her pupils very often and try to understand them. She should have a good relationship with her pupils.”

These athletes with an orientation towards coaching possessed a good standard of sports skill proficiency as illustrated in the admission test. They were the group of participants with strong physical outlook and prowess. In their mind, PE teachers were heroes. A hero, in their eyes, meant a person who has a high level of sport skills, great sports achievement and good coaching capabilities. Pupils could identify them as PE teachers at first sight. Their career choice to become PE teachers associated with the modelling of positive images by their coaches. Obviously, this group of participants were serious about sports and felt privileged under the elite sports system. With an achievement-oriented disposition, they could not stand failure because they perceived failure as losing face. In this sense, they were rather custodial in their belief about the sporting system with an inclination to protect and preserve the status quo reflected in such

system, policy and practices. They appeared to have a strong conception that PE teachers were identical to coaches and teaching was similar to coaching.

### **Group two: Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity**

Six participants had relatively more notable and positive experiences of their secondary school PE lessons as revealed in the interview scripts. They joined the teacher education programme because they loved PE. Some of them expressed that they were not satisfied with the current PE curriculum and wanted to improve it by being PE teachers themselves. They commonly articulated remarks such as “being enthusiastic” and “having high expectation of pupils” as necessary characteristics of a good PE teacher in the dialogues of the interview. The initial analysis of their orientation is outlined as follows:

#### **Sim(F) (case 1)**

Sim(F) felt a bit uneasy, glancing down at her reflective journal most of the time at the beginning of the interview. She joined the teacher education programme immediately after passing her A-level examination when she was nineteen. She came from a working class family and lived in a housing estate. Her sports skill proficiency was about average. Sim’s PE teacher was a caring person who had a very good relationship with her pupils. In addition, she was very skilful in sports. Sim took her teacher as her role model and wanted to become a PE teacher herself. In her mind, a good PE teacher should be like her teacher. In the interview, she said:

My teacher had great influence on me... I liked to talk to her and our relationship was good. She was not only my PE teacher, but also my friend. We talked about lots of things. We even shared secrets. It was from her that I got a lot of good advice concerning my studies, my life and everything.(Sim)

#### **Siu (F)(Case 14)**

Siu was a nineteen-year old woman coming from a middle class family. Her sports



skill proficiency was about average. She talked at length about her learning experiences in PE lessons in her secondary school in the interview:

I am happy when I can meet my teacher's expectation. In an athletic lesson, my teacher taught us how to do shot putting. She let us practise one by one and gave us encouragement when we failed to get certain skills right. It was followed by a demonstration of the skills. Gradually, my skills improved and I was confident in participating in the athletic meet. I finally became the champion. (Siu)

When being asked about her perception of a good PE teacher, she said, "She (the PE teacher) should have high expectations of her students. She must be keen on teaching and organising activities."

#### Lung (M) (Case 8)

Lung was a tall young man coming from a middle class family. He was a twenty-year-old pre-service PE teacher whose sports skill proficiency was of average standard. Lung met several irresponsible PE teachers in his secondary school days. For a long time, he had low opinions of PE lessons because he had learnt nothing from them. It was not until he met an impressive PE teacher in Form five that his perceptions of PE changed. Because of this teacher, Lung chose teaching PE as his profession. This is what he said in the interview:

From Form one to three, I didn't learn anything from any of my PE teachers. I am still disgusted with my Form one to three PE teachers. They were proud and never talked to us in a friendly way...I think I was lucky to meet a good PE teacher in Form 5 before I left the secondary school. He was a responsible teacher and taught me a lot about sports. (Lung)

#### Fai (M) (Case 10)

Fai was nineteen years old. He came from a working class family and lived in a housing estate. His father was a life-guard who worked in a swimming pool. Fai was

skilful in sports, especially in basketball and football. One of the reasons he joined the teacher education programme was that he wanted to become a PE teacher, similar to the one he admired and wanted to emulate. With a grateful expression on his face during the interview, he said:

He was my PE teacher from Form two to five. He was kind and he took good care of his pupils. He was skilful and had good knowledge in PE...He would talk to us if he knew that we were not happy. Although we have left school, he still keeps in touch with us and sometimes phones us. I think he is a very good teacher and I hope that I can be a teacher like him. (Fai)

#### Yan (F) (Case 4)

In the interview, Yan expressed that her parents were PE teachers. She joined the Institute when she was eighteen. She was fairly good at swimming but relatively weak in ball games. She described her parents as responsible and enthusiastic. Although she was much disappointed by the performance of her secondary school PE teachers who were “teaching nothing”, “talking on the mobile phone during the lessons” and “treating PE lessons as organised recesses”, she still had a strong belief that she would become a good PE teacher like her parents.

#### Leung (M)(Case 9)

Leung was a sporty young man of 20 years old. Although he represented his secondary school in several team ball games in the inter-school competition, his sports skill proficiency was about up to the average. He came from a working class family and was accepted on to the teacher education programme at his second attempt. He had gained many good and beneficial experiences through participating in many different kinds of sports. Consequently, he wanted to become a PE teacher and aimed at passing on the values of sports participation to his pupils. In the interview, he articulated proudly:

I took part in football, handball and athletic competitions. I was involved actively in the inter-class, inter-house and inter-school competitions in my secondary school...I am interested in sports and I would like to encourage my pupils to participate in sports...Pupils become healthy when actively participating in sports. Sports provide chances for pupils to enhance their collaborative skills and possess good behaviour. (Leung)

This group of participants joined the teacher education programme with an orientation towards teaching affinity. Their sports skill proficiency ranged from good to average. They were mainly influenced by their secondary school PE teachers in wanting to join the teacher education programme, except Yan who was affected by her parents. They treasured the positive values of the PE learning experience from the formal and informal PE curricula in their secondary schools as well as the caring attitude of their PE teachers. Positive reflections on those negative experiences that their secondary school PE teachers brought to them are also significant. They claimed that they wanted to follow in the footsteps of their secondary school PE teachers and to do something for their pupils through PE. They were progressive and idealistic. Promoting learning in school was their reason of joining the PE profession.

### **Group three: Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness**

From the analysis of the interview scripts, this is a group of student teachers who joined the teacher education programme at the last minute. Being weak in sports skill proficiency and looking less sporty physically, this group of pre-service PE teachers lacked confidence and were doubtful about their abilities to become PE teachers. They felt inadequate to cope with the requirements of their teacher education programme. Below is the initial analysis of three participants identified in this group.

Chan (M)(Case 2)

Chan was twenty years old. He was a young man who came from a working class

family. He was slightly overweight and his sports skill proficiency was below average. He identified sports skill proficiency as one of the most important requisites to become a PE teacher. He critically evaluated his sports skills since joining the teacher education programme. Deep in his mind, he was doubtful about his ability to become a PE teacher. His remarks concerning his perceptions on his sport skills competence were somewhat uncertain. In the interview, he said:

Frankly speaking, I am not really good at sports...I am not tall and strong enough. My skills are still not up to standard...I originally thought that my sports performance was outstanding in my secondary school. But, in a cross-country practice, I noticed that I was even weaker than some of the girls in the Institute. I feel so small and I'll try to improve myself and at least to be good at one sport. (Chan)

#### Kuen (M) (Case 6)

Kuen, who was nineteen years old, joined the teacher education programme after his graduation from a subsidised school. His sports skill proficiency was below average. He had difficulties in speaking clearly, expressing himself logically and showed little confidence when interacting with the interviewer. Although he believed that he had the potential to give clear instruction, he identified his need for improvement in the way he talked and having a good grasp of the teaching techniques. He described how he joined the Institute and identified his weaknesses in skills and fitness in the following interviewing dialogue:

At first, I was not accepted. I was so happy that I could enter the Institute at last. I was not skilful enough. The ability to express myself needed to be improved. After the training, I hope I can become stronger physically and more capable to express myself. I also hope that I can be more skilful in sports. (Kuen)

At the later part of the interview, he said in a rather distressful voice:

I am not used to the life here. The time schedule seems to be a bit too tight. I usually leave home at seven o'clock in the morning but come back home after nine in the evening. My father also questioned whether I could cope with it or not. (Kuen)

Man (M)(Case 13)

Man, who was nineteen years old, came from a middle class family. He was thin and looked rather weak physically. He experienced difficulties and collapsed because of exhaustion during one of the cross-country training sessions. PE was not his first choice. Because of his relatively low sports skill proficiency, he was insecure in tackling the course requirements. His lack of confidence was revealed as he talked at length about the admission exercise. In the interview, he said, "During the admission exercise, I was frightened when I saw a large group of fit and skilful candidates there waiting for the physical tests." He critically assessed himself, "I feel pity for myself. I am not good at any sports. All my colleagues have at least one event that he or she is particular good at." In the interview, this was how he recalled his painful experience of sports participation:

I remembered the time when I learnt to play Rugby. Once I tried to pass the ball to someone in my team. Just then, a boy, who was much taller and stronger than me tried to fake me. I was very frightened and I did not know how to stop, so I bumped onto him. But it did not hurt him at all. He could still stand there after the crash. Unfortunately, I had a bad fall and my leg was hurt. A big scar is still here on my leg. It reminds me of that frightening experience all the time. (Man)

These three participants joined the teacher education programme with an orientation towards apprehensiveness. Their sports skill proficiency was classified as weak as revealed in the admission test. They looked less sportive in physical appearance. PE was

not their first option in the teacher education programme. With a rather low physical image and a feeling of inadequacy in physical prowess, they doubted their ability to become PE teachers. They tended to recall episodic incidents during their primary school years or events experienced not long ago. Their recollection of little PE experience during their secondary school life illustrates that their involvement in PE was not significant.

#### **Group four: Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations**

Another group identified from the analysis of the interview scripts is the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations for joining the teacher education programme. This group of student teachers was more familiar with their career options, admission criteria and course requirements when compared with the other groups. They joined the teacher education programme mainly because they thought that PE course could offer them a better chance of getting a job, studying abroad and being coaches or officers in recreation associations. Below is the analysis of four participants identified as belonging to this group.

##### **Tung (M)(Case 12)**

Tung was twenty-two. He joined the Institute after taking the A-level examination consecutively on three occasions. He joined the teacher education programme because his academic results were not good enough to be accepted by other universities. Although he claimed that he had started involving himself in sports activities when he was a little boy, his sports skills proficiency was around average. As seen from the interview dialogue below, Tung obviously had a clear picture of his career option:

I could not enter the university. So I could either enter the Institute to become a teacher or take a diploma in other colleges. I thought that if I became a teacher, I would have more chance to study abroad...PE is my first elective subject because many people told me that I would have a better future if I chose PE. After

graduation, I can choose to become a teacher, a coach, or an officer in the recreational services department. (Tung)

Hung (F)(Case 16)

Hung came from an upper class family. She joined the Institute when she was twenty. She was active but her sports skill proficiency was below average. She had initially enrolled in a nurses training course but quit due to stress. Then she joined the Institute mainly due to the favourable employment chances of taking PE as an elective. In the interview, she said, “I am more interested in the cultural subjects and I believe that I can do better in PE than other subjects such as Home Economics...I would like to take a cultural subject because it will give me a better chance to get a job.”

Hang (M) (Case 11)

Hang was twenty years old. He was thin and had a rough voice. He was self-centred and always talked in an assertive manner. He had made two attempts before being accepted on the PE teacher education programme. He claimed to be fairly good at a variety of sports, especially athletics and ball games. However, he only obtained an average standard in sports skill proficiency in the admission test. His ambition, however, was to become a coach or a recreation officer. He took teaching PE as a stepping stone because he understood that he could not get such a post without teaching experience. In the interview, he stated,

I am interested in sports but I don't want to be a teacher. I want to work as a coach or an officer in some recreation associations. Joining the Institute and taking PE as one of my electives would help me to achieve that. (Hang)

Kwan (M)(case 18)

Kwan was twenty-one years old and came from a working class family. His result in the sports skill proficiency test was below average. Although he related his career

choice to his interest in sports, what concerned him most was the opportunity of getting a job. He thought that through studying PE, a job was almost guaranteed. He stressed the same point a few times in the interview. He opined, “In addition to interest, I think it’s easier for a PE student to get a teaching post...”

The sports skill proficiency of this group of participants ranges from the average to weak as shown in the admission test. They thought that taking PE as an elective would enable them to have greater employability and better career options of being a PE teacher, coach, recreation officer or to study abroad. It appears that they were dominated by a utilitarian way of thinking. They were relatively custodial in their perception and tended to act on things that were beneficial to them.

#### **Group five: Participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style**

From the analysis of the interview scripts, the last group of participants entered the PE profession without any clear reasons. They did not have much expectation of themselves or of the subject. They had a relatively vague conception of the meaning and value of PE. Some of them joined the PE programme because they thought that it was easy and comfortable to be PE teachers. Some just accepted what had been offered to them. They did not have a clear picture of their future needs. For most of them, establishing a good relationship with the pupils should be the key feature of PE teachers. Some even thought that they would try to meet their lecturers’ requirement just because they wanted to survive throughout their teacher education programme. Below is the analysis of some of their more distinctive traits:

#### **Kin (M)(Case 17)**

Kin was twenty-three years old and his standard of sports skill proficiency was about average. He was an immigrant from Mainland China when he was thirteen. He came from a working class family and lived on a housing estate. In the interview, he said, “It is



always my dream to become a PE teacher.” Surprisingly, PE was only his fifth choice for the teacher-training course. Chinese and Putonghua were his target elective subjects. He joined the teacher education programme for PE teachers because it was the only offer that the Institute had given him.

From the very beginning of the interview, he tried to be deferential and complimentary and said, “I have heard about you (the interviewing lecturer). You are quite famous....” When being asked about the characteristics of a good PE teacher and his urgent needs, he immediately articulated social competence as an important element. However, he immediately jumped to the expectation that he had of the Institute. He commented,

A good relationship with the pupils is a must... There should be more lecturers in the Institute so that they won’t be involved too much in administrative work and concentrate more on helping us to teach. (Kin)

Shing(M) (Case 19)

Shing was a quiet young man. He was twenty-one years old. He came from a middle class family and his main sport was softball. His overall sports skill proficiency was up to the average. In the interview, he made an interesting remark on how he came to his career choice, illustrating that his career choice was resulted from the dialectical constraints he encountered:

I don’t know why I chose teaching PE as my career. I just took what I was given. I think I have been studying subjects like Chinese and English since kindergarten. PE seems to be an interesting subject and I want to know more about it. (Shing)

He acknowledged that “I am not very sure what PE is and I just know how to play a few ball games”. He thought that a good lecturer could help him to explore and show his

talent.

Kai(M) (case 7)

Kai was twenty-two years old. He graduated from a subsidised school. He quit his office work to become a pre-service PE teacher because he found his office work boring after working in the office for one and a half years. He was careful but had a low expectation on himself. He joined the teacher education programme just because he wanted to become an instructor of any kind of sport and enhance his knowledge in PE. In the interview, he recalled, "I had some unhappy experiences in my school life. However, I took them easily and continued to do things in my own way." At the very beginning of the interview, he tried to please the interviewer (his tutor) by describing his appearance and fatherly care for pre-service PE teachers:

Your appearance is OK. You look like a PE teacher...I was told that you are good at quite a number of sports by a second year student...I want to continue to talk about you. I think you treat your students as your sons. You take care of them and expect them to do well... (Kai)

When asked about his immediate need, he stated, "I hope that PE lecturers can teach us more events in detail and in depth. I hope they can pass on us more skills for teaching PE."

Ho (M)(Case 15)

Ho was twenty-one years old. He was a young man who came from a middle class family. He was selected as a youth player by a famous professional football club in Hong Kong when he was in secondary school. Ho did not have a strong conception about PE and teaching PE. He thought that he was not very academically oriented and believed that it was easy to be a secondary school PE teacher. He was sure that he was capable of doing the job without much effort. In the interview, he opined:

I have never thought about it before entering the Institute. I just thought that it was only something concerning sports... I thought that it was easy to teach PE for I found that my PE teachers in secondary school did not have to do any markings. They often played with us after school...I just thought that it was easy to teach a class of pupils how to play. (Ho)

These four participants entered the teacher education programme with an orientation towards an easy-going style. They possessed an average standard of sports skill proficiency. Their professional learning attitude appeared to be passive when compared with those with an orientation towards teaching affinity. As revealed in the interviews, some tended to be somewhat obsequious while others were inclined to rely heavily on their tutors for their professional development.

Following the identification of five groups of participants, emerging themes concerning a number of issues of how participants were being socialized into PE teaching before any formal teacher training were identified from the analysis of the scripts of the interview and reflective journals. They include:

- Career choice
- Characteristics of a good PE teacher
- Notable PE related experiences

### **4.3 Career Choice**

This theme evolved into the concern of the participants over their career choice. The following section provides a discussion on why pre-service PE teachers join the teacher training programme and how they negotiate their personal and professional identities among various attractors and facilitators before joining the programme.

#### **4.3.1 Sports-continuation for all groups**

According to the analysis of the transcripts of the interview and reflective journals, all participants were found to be involved in one or more sports during their primary and secondary school life. It is not surprising that “interested in sports” was commonly claimed as one of their reasons for joining the teacher education programme. They believed that PE teacher education programme would provide them with opportunities to continue their interest and extend their sporting life span.

Typically, all participants with an orientation towards coaching hoped to keep up with their sporting life as well as to become coaches. Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity expressed their view that joining the teacher education programme would enable them to continue their involvement in ball games, swimming and football respectively. The participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness claimed that their enjoyable sports involvement in primary school life was the major factor in their career choice. In the interview, Kuen said frankly, “I have enjoyed participating in sports since I was very small. I am interested in every type of sports. I like watching sports news.” Chan said, “It is because I am interested in sports and I can get a lot of satisfaction out of it. It is suitable for me to be a PE teacher...I was happy and satisfied when I was awarded the prizes in the Athletic Meeting in my primary school...” Similarly, the participants with orientations towards an easy-going style and pragmatic considerations also claimed that “to continue with their interest in sports participation” was their main reason for joining the PE teacher education programme. In the interview, Shing recalled, “I like sports and I would like to work with my interest. Therefore, teaching is an ideal career for me.” Hang echoed this statement saying that, “I am interested in sports and I am good at athletics, football and handball. Being a PE teacher will allow me to continue the involvement in these activities. Moreover, it is always good to work with ones’ interest.”

The articulation of “Sport continuation theme” as the main reason for the participants’ career choice can be traced back to the primary and secondary school PE curriculum. As mentioned in Chapter II, sport has been regarded as an important component for “cultivating elitists”, “building character”, “making worthy use of leisure” and “cultivating as a means for life-time commitment” in the PE curriculum. It has been an essential component of an all round education ever since the seventies. Accordingly, the “conformist socialisation through sports” model became dominant in the school PE curriculum. The selective characteristic of sports was admitted and the sportive status quo was maintained. These participants were inevitably nurtured through participating in sports. The results confirmed similar findings conducted by Pooley (1972; 1975), Templin et al (1982), Schempp (1989), Dewar (1989), Dodds et al (1991), Green (1998) and Curtner-Smith (1999). It signifies the kind of socialisation into sport through which pre-service PE teachers acquired knowledge and skills. They gained satisfaction and became involved in sport. It then gradually built up into the kind of unproblematic conception of sporting values that they embraced. They treasured their sporting experiences. Through “socialise via sport”, they decided to choose a sport-related career such as becoming a PE teacher. PE teaching would serve as a means of continuing their involvement in sports and sustaining the interests that they had fostered and reinforced over a long period. All this represents a kind of social institution of sports on the life of pupils in school in Hong Kong.

#### **4.3.2 Coaching theme for the participants with an orientation towards coaching**

For the participants with an orientation towards coaching, there was a desire to follow in the footsteps of their coaches and to be influential in the elite sports world. Obviously, their coaches were the ones who influenced their decision-making. In the interview, To said,

My career choice to be a PE teacher was affected by my coach. I hope that one day I can be proud of myself. Coaching the Hong Kong Team is always my dream. Teaching PE will give me a chance to make it come true. (To)

Chung and Lai said,

Teaching is my first choice ...teaching PE is full of challenge and it is really an exciting task. I think it will be just like the feeling that I got from my basketball competitions. I would like training together with people and preparing for the big games. I would like to be an influential person like my coach. (Chung)

I met a good coach when I was studying in the secondary school. She gave me an opportunity to exercise my potentials in sports by inviting me to take part in some of the competitions. I was deeply impressed by her and I want to be like her. (Lai)

#### **4.3.3 Service theme for the participants with an orientation of teaching affinity**

Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity differed in their career choice from others by articulating it with the “service theme” (Lortie, 1975). “Helping others” and “contributing something to the society” were frequently expressed as their purposes of joining the teacher education programme. Such a conception may be influenced by the neo-Confucian social values within which teachers in a Chinese society such as Hong Kong have been perceived as performing a sacred, spiritual and social mission. Obviously, participants like Siu, Leung, Fai, Sim, Yan and Lung who were fresh graduates from secondary schools, had a rather idealistic conception about the world. This group of participants found that their teachers were people to be respected like their parents. They visualised their role as reinforcing the virtue of what they had experienced from previous schooling. Their PE teachers socialised them to the values of PE teaching, the role of PE teachers and their decision to become PE teachers.

Lortie’s (1975) articulation of “apprenticeship of observation” can be applied here for these students tried to emulate the behaviour of their PE teachers by entering the

teaching profession. Missions such as “being a good PE teacher”; “educating students through sports activities”; “benefiting pupils physically and cognitively through their enthusiastic teaching”; “encouraging pupils to do sports”; “improving the status of the subject” and “teaching pupils as individuals” are repeated frequently in the participants’ writings of reflective journals.

Both Lung and Siu had good and responsible PE teachers in their secondary schooling and they found their teaching impressive. They wanted to do something for their pupils as their own teachers had done. In the interview, Lung recalled, “My decision of choosing teaching as my career was mainly affected by one of the teachers in my secondary school... It was my own experience and I really hope that my pupils can benefit from my teaching.” Siu echoed those words,

I was lucky to be taught by quite a number of good PE teachers...It is a pity that PE has always been neglected in the Hong Kong education system. So I hope that I can do something to improve the image of PE in Hong Kong. (Siu)

Sim commented, “I would like to follow in her (secondary school PE teacher) footsteps. I think I can educate my pupils just like she did.” Leung supported this by saying that “My secondary school PE teacher is a very good role model and I want to be like him...I would like to encourage my pupils to participate in sports like him.”

Although Yan perceived her secondary school PE teachers in a negative way, she was determined to become a PE teacher. She wanted to improve her pupils’ health and physical fitness. She said, “I want to and I would like to become a PE teacher because PE is my favourite subject. It promotes health and physical fitness. I hope my pupils can learn something from me.”

#### **4.3.4 Employment Security theme for participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations**

Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations (Hung, Kwan, Tung and Hang) related their career choice through the employment security theme and the feasible options available for them. Hung and Kwan joined the PE teacher education programme because they thought that it would be easier for them to find jobs when compared with others electives. Hang anticipated that joining the PE teacher education programme could open up for him other careers such as recreation officers and sports coaches. Tung realised that he would have a greater chance to study abroad if he chose PE as his elective study.

#### **4.3.5 No occupational alternatives for participants with orientations towards an easy-going style and apprehensiveness**

Participants with orientations towards an easy-going style and apprehensiveness frankly explained the opportunity and constraints that they had to face. They related their career choice mostly against the backdrop of their unfavourable academic results and the diminished chance of being admitted to the university. Joining the teacher education institute was their second best option in career choice. Ho illustrated such an attitude in the interview by saying that “I did not do well in academic subjects such as Chinese. I could only get a pass in these subjects. So I took PE. I am interested in sports...It provides me with chances to improve and work with my own interests.”

The career choice of the pre-service PE teachers was a compromise among their hopes, plans, interests, aspirations and the ranges of occupational options available. Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations (Hung, Kwan, Tung and Hang) related their career choice with feasible options like “PE teachers”, “working as recreation officer”, “being sports coaches” and “studying abroad” that were available to them. The participants with an orientation towards coaching like To, Chung and Lai wanted to become coaches rather than PE teachers. The findings resonate with Dewar’s



(1989) study on high school students, although her students' career options related rather more to sports medicine and business.

Choice of career is a rather complex and problematic process within which the participants actually entered the anticipatory socialisation by drawing on their teacher perspectives concerning the teaching of PE. Such a process represents the active nature of the human agency of the participants in determining their career choice. It constitutes the beginning phase of acquiring and modifying participants' beliefs, values and norms as a group through the anticipatory socialisation.

#### **4.4 Characteristics of a good PE teacher**

Another theme that emerged in this phase of study concerns the participants' image of "a good PE teacher". Preliminary coding of the interview and reflective journals clustered the characteristics in different areas such as "skills and knowledge in PE", "instructional and interpersonal interaction skills", "wisdom of teaching" and "personal attributes". The summary of participants' responses on their perceived characteristics of "a good PE teacher" is shown in Appendix 14.

The participants reported overwhelmingly that "Sports skills" and "PE knowledge" are the requisites of a good PE teacher. "Teaching techniques" and "relationships with pupils" were identified as significant qualities. Other recognised characteristics included personal attributes such as a "sporty appearance", "enthusiasm" and a "loud voice".

Through cross case comparison, the result supported the notion that different groups of participants possessed respective conceptions on the characteristics of a good PE teacher. The participants with an orientation towards coaching thought that "being physically fit and active" was the most important element. Those with an orientation towards teaching affinity put more emphasis on "the wisdom of PE teaching". All participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations were in favour of the

“human relation capabilities”. The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style associated “the mastery of instructional competence” as the defining characteristic of a good PE teacher. It is interesting to note that the participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness did not show much interest in recognising the qualities of a good PE teacher.

The portrayal of the images of “a good PE teacher” by all participants described vividly the appearance and personality attributes of the PE teachers as active, strong, fit, muscular, tireless and always ready for challenge. Other sets of personal characteristics such as a sense of humour, calmness, confidence, friendliness, patience and kind-heartedness were also common requisites of teachers. The responses support the findings of similar studies (Hendry and Writing, 1972; Hendry, 1975; Lawson, 1983a; Arrighi and Young, 1987) that there is a cultural stereotype of PE teachers or what may be regarded as a subculture within the teaching profession in most participants’ perspectives.

The results echo the kind of “sports socialisation” within which pre-service PE teachers associate themselves with the image of a sportive type as typical PE teachers. The image is male-dominated. Concomitantly, it is the actual image of most PE teachers in schools. It may also be the case that those students with relatively high skills are the privileged group in the admission test in the recruitment process of PE and its subsequent programmes. The process signifies the social construction of the image of PE teachers from the eyes of the participants.

In congruence with the study of Templin, Woodford and Mulling (1982), all participants with an orientation towards coaching and some with an orientation towards teaching affinity (Sim, Siu and Fai) affirmed their aspiration to model the role behaviour of their coaches, PE teachers and parents with whom they positively identified. However, as illustrated previously, some participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity (Leung, Yan and Lung) complained about the performance of their PE teachers. It implies that they might partially link the desire to teach to the ideal imaginary role model only.

Nevertheless, these socialising agents not only affected their career choice, but also triggered their perceptions of teaching PE. This raises the question of how this particular part of their teacher perspectives would evolve through encountering their teacher education programme. It is also important to find out the extent to which the role of teacher education plays a determinative role in shaping their teacher perspectives.

#### **4.5 Successful and unsuccessful PE learning experiences**

The last theme emerged from data of the reflective journals is the participants' successful and unsuccessful incidents concerning PE in their school days. The attempt is to detect participants' images concerning PE. Generally speaking, most participants articulated their successful and unsuccessful incidents with sports participation. However, cross case analysis illustrates differences in perceptions across different groups concerning their images of PE. Below is the analysis that emerged in accordance with the respective groups.

##### **4.5.1 Sport Training as critical incidents recalled by participants with an orientation towards coaching**

Participants with an orientation towards coaching recalled their sports training and competitions as their critical incidents concerning PE in their reflective journals. They valued the process of training and the outcomes of the competitions. In their recollection of their critical incidents, Lai wrote, "the sports training camp (was my satisfying incident). We slept, ate and lived together. We all worked hard for the big game. Such an experience was great." To recorded,

I hardly forget that the training I had gone through in Guangzhou (a city in Mainland China). I worked with other youths. You can't imagine how happy we were when we trained hard and left the schoolbooks behind. (To)

#### **4.5.2 Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity recalled “Learning in the PE lessons” as critical incidents**

From the analysis of the data of the reflective journals, the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity described their successful experiences concerning PE in the form of episodes and snapshots illustrating some of the incidents in their PE lessons. They could remember in detail the types of activities and even the run down of the lessons. Some of them incisively discerned how their secondary school PE teachers had tried their best to teach them something, which promoted positive learning. For them, “having responsible and irresponsible PE teachers”, “effective and ineffective teaching techniques”, and “learning something during PE lessons” were critical experiences concerning PE.

Siu felt satisfied when she had mastered certain physical skills. Implicitly, she was actually observing her teacher’s teaching as an apprentice. Her teacher’s attitude and performance served as positive and negative models of her teaching repertoires. In the reflective journal, Siu wrote:

I have learnt a lot of skills in my PE lessons...The teacher always encouraged us and gave good demonstrations when necessary. Then, I improved and gradually mastered the skills...(Siu)

For Sim, Yan and Leung, the PE teachers’ teaching and influences were critical to their life. Yan recorded in her reflective journal, “I enjoyed the trampoline lessons because I learned how to bounce and I received some positive advice from the teacher and my classmates.” Sim and Leung wrote:

I was satisfied when I was praised by my PE teacher on sprinting...I felt unhappy when we once lost in the match. Perhaps, the teacher was absent that day and the male PE teacher did not know us very well. The whole team lost their spirit. We played badly and we even quarrelled. (Sim)

I had a very good PE teacher in my secondary school days. He was friendly and he could teach us a variety of sports. He had good knowledge of PE. His work and ability told us that he was good at sports. Our relationship was good. We talked to each other quite often and we could even call him by a nickname. (Leung)

#### **4.5.3 Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness recalled “experiences in primary school” as critical incidents**

With relatively limited involvement, experiences and achievement in PE in their secondary school years, the participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness tended to recall their notable incidents with their PE experiences in their primary school years. Chan and Kuen expressed their trait in their writings of the reflective journal below:

I was happy and satisfied when I got prizes in the athletic meeting in primary school. At that time, I was also chosen as one of the school representatives and took part in some competitions. I was delighted. (Chan)

I had a wonderful year when I was in primary four. I was chosen to be the member of the school basketball team. I was very surprised for they seldom had a young player who was in primary four. I was the youngest one but scored lots of points during the matches that year. (Kuen)

#### **4.5.4 Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations recalled “winning and losing” episodes as critical incidents**

All participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations except Kwan, recalled their winning and losing episodes in sports competitions as their critical incidents concerning PE. Winning and losing seemed to be important to this group of students. It is difficult to be sure whether such perception relates with their orientation towards pragmatic considerations or not. In the reflective journal, Hung wrote, “I felt successful when I won in an aquatic meet. Being beaten in a match was an unhappy incident.” Hang and Tung said:

I got a number of prizes in some sports competitions...I felt happy and satisfied because I could have a chance to train some junior pupils. After 9-10 sessions of training, they all became so fit that they won the championship. (Tung)

I remembered that I once took part in a match organised by the Coco Cola Company. I was the goalkeeper of my school team... I successfully kept the goal clear and I scored one point for my team during the penalty kick... Although we lost at the end, I was still very happy and felt satisfied. (Hang)

#### **4.5.5 Participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style recalled “negative modelling of PE teachers” as critical incidents**

Comparatively, the participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style related their notable incidents with their unpleasant experience during their secondary school PE lessons in their reflective journals. Most of them could not forget how their PE teachers treated them unfairly during the PE lessons. Kai wrote, “I remember my PE teacher in Form 5. He had a perfect appearance and he was skilful. However, he was not welcome by most of us because he was not friendly.” Shing protested in his writing, “I learnt very little from the PE lessons. I was unhappy when the PE teacher was too strict and he punished the pupils. It was a pity that I sometimes was one of the victims.” Kin wrote:

I would like to talk about my PE teachers in Guangzhou. He was so strict. I remember that once I was late for a PE class, I was punished by being made to run 50 times round the court. I was only a primary four pupil at that time. (Kin)

Ho protested in his writing:

The PE teachers! They were unreasonable. He put his pair of spectacles at the side of the court during the PE lesson. Unluckily, someone broke them accidentally. He was so angry that he asked us to pay for it. (Ho)

The participants with orientations towards coaching, apprehensiveness and pragmatic considerations associated their critical incidents with training, winning and losing in sports competitions in the informal PE curriculum during their secondary and

primary schools. Such experiences provided them with opportunities to show their sporting talent and to get away from their boring schoolwork. Very often, they gained a sense of achievement and recognition.

On the other hand, the participants with orientations towards teaching affinity and an easy-going style illustrated the kind of preconceived judgement concerning the proper image of PE teachers, their teaching and the effectiveness of the PE lessons. This experience was perceived both in positive and negative ways. They discerned that PE teachers should be fair. PE teachers have to be enthusiastic, responsible and demanding. They should be able to give clear instruction and demonstrate well. The findings echo the “preconceived” characteristics of a good PE teacher mentioned earlier. These selected episodes are based on “personal likes and dislikes” and “signify pleasant memories and disturbing instances”. These collected and recollected experiences constituted the formation of the participants’ skills, knowledge and professional orientations of PE through what they had followed and observed as pupils in schools. It is interesting to see how these experiences provided a continuing influence over the pedagogical practices and orientations of the participants when they began to interact with the formal teacher education programme.

#### **4.6 Summary and Discussion**

The analysis of data of the pre-training phase identifies commonalities of groups of participants with different teacher perspectives in terms of orientations, personality, physical attributes and attitudinal dispositions. Accordingly, five groups of participants were recognized. They are the groups of participants with orientations towards coaching, teaching affinity, apprehensiveness, pragmatic considerations and an easy-going style respectively. They were later found to convey distinctive perceptions concerning three emerging themes. The themes include career choice, perceptions on the characteristics of

a good PE teacher and successful and unsuccessful incidents related to PE. The overall characteristics of each group of participants can be summarised in the form of a typology.

Participants with an orientation towards coaching were nurtured in sports training and achievement before joining the teacher education programme. All of them possessed good sports skill proficiency. Their coaches influenced their career decision to become PE teachers. They thought that joining the teacher education programme would enable them to continue their sporting life and to become sports coaches. For them, PE teaching was similar to sports coaching and being PE teachers was just a stepping-stone to become elite coaches. They were the privileged group in the sporting system. They perceived themselves as heroes and any failure was regarded as losing face. This might be a consequence of their predominant performance-oriented characteristics. In this sense, they were rather custodial and their thinking and acting were dominated by sports achievement.

The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity were the ones who had positive experiences from their school PE curricula. The standard of their sports skill proficiency ranged from average to good. Their secondary school PE teachers and parents were the most important significant others influencing their career choice. They took PE teachers as their role models and possessed the mission of educating pupils through PE. Promoting learning was identified as a basic role of good PE teachers. They possess what Goldthorpe et al (1975) have identified as “solidaristic orientation” for their workers, meaning that involvement in PE teaching is an end in itself. They tended to have high job satisfaction and a strong sense of the identity in their work.

The pre-service PE teachers with an orientation towards apprehensiveness were the less skilful participants concerning their sports skill proficiency. With unimpressive physical outlook, they had a rather low image of themselves and lacked confidence to become PE teachers. They joined the teacher education programme because of their limited career alternatives. They appeared to be less custodial in their thinking and acting



as they did not have a concrete conception about the characteristics of PE teachers and teaching. However, they wanted to struggle hard to improve and confirm their identity as PE teachers.

The participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations possessed much knowledge concerning course admission, the course requirement of the teacher education programme and their career options. Their sports skill proficiency ranged from average to below average. In their mind, joining the teacher education programme provided them with better opportunity of getting a job and an opening for other career options like coaches or recreation officers. They were well informed about themselves and tended to act on things on a pragmatic basis. They appeared to perceive and act on practical considerations. What Goldthorpe et al (1975) have identified an “instrumental orientation” for their workers may be appropriate for describing these participants too. They tended to see joining the teacher education programme as a means to an end. In this aspect, they were rather custodial in terms of thinking and acting out on pragmatic considerations.

The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style had relatively vague conceptions about PE. They did not have much expectation of themselves and the subject. They joined the teacher education programme without any specific reasons. Some perceived that teaching PE was an easy job. Some were obsequious and perceived the instructional competence as an important characteristic of a good PE teacher. What they could recall concerning notable PE experiences were those involving being treated unfairly in the lessons and their secondary school PE teachers appeared be negative role-models for them.

The above findings provide information for a better understanding of the kinds of pre-service PE teachers attracted to the programmes in Hong Kong. They possessed different teacher perspectives in terms of the orientations, dispositions and professional conceptions that they had brought to their teacher education. In fact, their teacher

perspectives were largely formed during the pre-training phase. This illustrates the possibility of societal and sport socialisation that pre-service PE teachers experienced before the impacts exerted by the teacher education programme. Dialectical forces such as social constraints in the form of occupational opportunity available, significant others and personal aspirations act together to trigger the visualisation of their teacher perspectives. The preliminary analysis of different groups of participants is summarized below:

Groups	1	2	3	4	5
Orientations towards	Coaching	Teaching affinity	Apprehensiveness	Pragmatic considerations	An easy-going style
Significant Others/ Career choice	Coaches /Coaching theme	Secondary School PE Teachers and parents/ Service theme	No occupational alternatives	Employment security theme , better career options and employ-ability	No occupational alternatives, accepted what was given to them
Notable PE-related experience	Sports training and competitions	Learning from PE lessons in secondary schools	Sports experiences in primary school	Winning and losing episodes concerning sports competitions	Negative modelling of their secondary school PE teachers
Attitudinal dispositions concerning PE teaching	-PE teaching equalled to coaching, -Physical prowess	Doing something for the pupils	Sports skill as re-requisite for PE teaching, lacking of confidence to become PE teachers	Joining PE teaching meant easy to find a job	Apple polishing, not much expectation on the subject and themselves, PE teaching was an easy task
Physical dispositions (Sports skill proficiency)	-Physical prowess, -All with good standard	1 above the average and 5 about up to the average	-unimpressive sportive outlook, -All below the average	2 about up to the average and 2 below the average	All about up to the average
Images and characteristics of a good PE teachers and teaching	-Teacher as heroes, -Being physically fit and active	Responsible and enthusiastic Teachers, -The wisdom of PE teaching	Teachers with good sports skills	Teachers with human relation capabilities	Teachers with instructional competence

Table 6: The pre-training teacher perspectives in terms of orientations and dispositions of five groups of participants

Apart from the identification of five groups of participants with their respective teacher perspectives in terms of orientations, dispositions and professional conceptions, three issues from this study phase including participants' biographical experiences, the

conflict relating to their programmatic expectations and the implications of their conceptions of school PE experience will be discussed and picked up in Chapter VIII.

The above discourse serves as a yardstick for future development and comparison in the subsequent data analyses. It helps to formulate the “generative questions” for the next phase of data collection. Did different groups of participants continue to socialise themselves in distinctive ways? What were the changes in their teacher perspectives when encountering the PE teacher education programme? How did they learn professionally? Apart from exploring these questions, the next chapter titled the “The Professional Orientation Phase” will test and refine the tentative emerging typology proposed.

## **Chapter V**

### **The Professional Orientation Phase**

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the data analysis of the “professional orientation phase”. This phase of study marks a period of six months at the beginning of the teacher education programme. In this phase, the professional preparation programme is thought to be the main socialising agent. After this period, the participants had to equip and prepare themselves for their first teaching practice in secondary schools.

The participants took a number of credit-bearing modules during this period. The first group of modules includes:

- “Foundations and Principles of PE”,
- “Teaching of PE” and
- “Curriculum Studies in PE”.

These three modules are primarily theoretical modules aiming at building up participants’ academic, pedagogical and curricular knowledge for the teaching of PE. The second group of modules includes the two professional activity-oriented modules:

- “Skill Proficiency 2 ” and
- “Skill Proficiency 3”

The module “Skill Proficiency 2” covers “western folk dance”, “athletics” and “gymnastics” while the “Skill Proficiency 3” involves pre-service PE teachers in “volleyball”, “basketball” and “outdoor education”. They are intended to develop pre-service PE teachers’ theoretical and practical repertoires in acquiring the content knowledge of PE that they needed to teach in secondary schools.

All skill proficiency activities mentioned, except outdoor education are classified as “common core” activities in the secondary school syllabus. They are strongly recommended by the Curriculum Development Council of Hong Kong (CDC, 1975; 1980; 1988) to be included in the formal PE curriculum (see Appendix 3 for the curriculum). The teaching units of volleyball and outdoor education had not been completed at the time of the investigation so they cannot be included in the analysis made in this chapter.

All the PE modules described were modules designed by the Department of Physical Education and Sports Science. In order to socialise pre-service PE teachers towards desired perspectives and practices, we need to be reminded of Graber's (1989) remarks made regarding training programmes:

When recruits enter training programmes with strong preconceived beliefs based upon personal experience, it is not surprising to discover conflicts between students' expectations and the intentions of the teacher education faculty. These conflicts, if unresolved, will affect what students come to learn about teaching and which aspects of training will be internalised while in the programme. (p.61)

Explorations were conducted with the five groups of participants identified at the pre-training phase. The groups differed in their physical attributes and attitudinal dispositions including differences in the levels of sports skill proficiency, degree of confidence to become PE teachers, career choice, perceptions on a successful PE teacher and their notable PE experiences. The question of how their pre-training "teacher perspectives" changes when interacting with the teacher education programme was investigated. Other areas of investigation include tracing the relevance of the categorization of the participants' grouping for analysis, identifying the development of their teacher perspectives, elaborating how they experienced their teacher education programme and learned professionally, and distinguishing the kind of professional knowledge which had significant effect on their occupational socialisation processes.

Data were collected at the end of the sixth month of their study through interviewing and writing of reflective journals. The analysis starts by evaluating the participants' perception on each individual module attended. Participants were asked to recall notable topics and activities of each teaching module that they had recorded in their reflective journal. They were also asked to give comments on the relevance of each module attended. The purpose is to find out the kind of professional knowledge that the participants perceived as salient. It also helps in the detection of changes in their

biographies After the analysis of the participants' professional learning from individual module, further processing of the data by means of cross case comparison among different groups of participants was conducted.

The samples of the interview and reflective journal are included in Appendices 15 and 16. A detailed review of participants' perceptions on their practical and theoretical modules respectively is summarised in Appendix 17. The subsequent section provides a preliminary analysis of participants' perceptions on their teaching modules. A detailed elaboration of how each group of participants experienced their professional learning is included in the third to seventh section. This chapter will end with a summary, drawing together the information gathered from the different groups of the participants, their development of professional knowledge and the issue of dance curriculum in local secondary schools.

## **5.2 Preliminary analysis**

From the scripts of the interviews and reflective journals, most of the male participants had relatively little prior knowledge and skills in dance, while some of the females were very familiar with it because of previous experience gained in their secondary school PE programme. Most male participants had some experience in playing basketball. Chung and Lai were elite basketball players who had participated in the sport for a long time. Fai represented Hong Kong in the Inter-city School Basketball Tournament and thus he was a good player. Some of the female participants such as Yan, Siu and Hung had relatively little experience of playing the game and their skill proficiency in basketball was below average. All participants had been involved in some kind of athletic activities in their secondary school life and To was an elite athlete specialising in the 110m hurdling with the skill level of national standard. Gymnastics

was regarded as a difficult unit, for most of the participants were not familiar with the skills required.

The tutors of “dance”, “basketball”, “gymnastics”, “Teaching of PE” and “Curriculum Theories in PE” integrated the “replicative”, “applicative”, “interpretive” and “associative” modes of knowledge use (Broudy et al, 1974) in their teaching. As identified by Broudy et al (1974) and Eraut (1994), “replicative” and “applicative” modes of knowledge use have been dominant in a large proportion of schooling and have also been prominent in higher education. “Interpretative” knowledge involves understanding and judgement. “Associative” knowledge involves cognitive deliberation of the relationship of different concepts. It is the base for generalisation. Most tutors intended to build up the participants’ professional knowledge by incorporating “the pedagogical know how” into the content knowledge of these physical activities.

### **5.3 Participants with an orientation towards coaching**

#### **Professional Activity-oriented Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards coaching tended to be pedagogical attentive and pretended to participate actively in the practical modules:

This group of participants were confident in dealing with all practical teaching units of the PE teacher education programmes. It might possibly be due to their physical prowess, extensive training and sports achievement experiences. However, they were also inclined to attend to the pedagogical component with practices, competitions and training of the teaching modules. Taking their professional learning in the dance unit as an example, Lai had learnt to dance in her secondary school days, so she valued the pedagogical element conveyed in the unit more. She said, “I have learnt most of the dances before. However, I first learnt how to teach dance this year. ....On the whole, the learning of how to teach in the module interested me most.” On the contrary, the hurdler,



To, knew nothing about dance before. He appreciated the “applicative” mode of knowledge use in the form of “how to teach” component included in the unit. He commented, “During the dance lesson, I learnt how to plan a lesson and select the teaching progression. It was a good experience.” Their professional learning in the basketball unit also reflects this. In their interview, To remarked, “He (the tutor) taught us how to dribble in the first lesson...We have to teach in progressive stages. I have learnt how to teach some basic skills of basketball in junior secondary forms.” Lai noted, “I have learnt to teach basketball with limited resources. I think that I am able to teach basketball now.”

Being influenced by their coach in their sporting life, they apparently expected that their tutors should be as proficient athletes as their coaches. Chung did not have much confidence in his tutor and thus had doubts about his teaching because of his relatively low skill proficiency level. However, he was honest enough to admit that he had learnt some teaching methods. In the interview, he said:

The lecturer is not skilful enough and he could not teach us much. He never let us take part in any matches. Let’s talk about it quietly. I think what he suggested to us cannot be practical and the Form 1-3 pupils will not be interested in those activities.  
(Chung)

All of them were very familiar with the skills of athletics because of their extensive involvement in the event in their secondary school PE curriculum. They were not satisfied with the limited scope of content. They were disappointed with the elementary level of the skills taught and the teaching content, which did not include training and competitions. They claimed that they could only gain a small amount of professional learning. However, it is interesting to note that they pretended to participate actively in the teaching activities. Obviously, they had different perceptions of such an act. Lai dragged on the module by involving in the practices and training because she thought that she could do nothing

other than to pretend to participate actively. To treated the practices as his show time. Chung showed his concern about the inadequacies of the module. He worried that the module might not be able to prepare his colleagues for teaching athletics in school. Thus, he just wanted to offer his help to the weaker ones. They demonstrated the kind of human agency in getting along with their professional learning. The dialogues of Lai, To and Chung illustrate such conception:

I don't have any difficulties in encountering the unit of athletics because I participate in an athletics meet each year. Well, I think I have learnt nothing in the module. The skills taught are really at the elementary level. However, I still actively participated in the activities. What could we do? (Lai)

Everything taught in the module (Athletics) is superficial and I have come across most of them in my coaching course. What we need is some advanced knowledge concerning training and improvement of performance. But I am still actively involved in the sessions as I treated it as an opportunity for me to demonstrate how good I am in athletics. (To)

We learnt a little in Athletics. Please don't tell Mr. X about it. What he taught is superficial. Maybe, he adopted the self-oriented approach. He asked us to try everything ourselves. Anyway, I don't think I will have any problem in teaching athletics. Many of my colleagues will come across difficulty when teaching athletics for they need to learn from concrete examples. I worry most about their ability so I offer to help. (Chung)

### **Theoretical Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards coaching preferred “practical experience” and “pedagogical emphasis of the theoretical modules”:

All participants in this group seemed to have difficulties in recalling the theoretical concepts taught in the module of “Foundation and Principles of PE” as illustrated in their recollection of bits of its content. They were not satisfied because they could gain little professional knowledge. In the interview, Lai referred to the problem of language as an

obstacle of her professional learning by saying that “because of the medium of instruction, I could not understand the content of the module”. Chung expressed it in an implicit term of “communication”. He said, “Frankly speaking, we can’t expect much from it. You know who taught us...It is a matter of communication...”

However, they acknowledged their professional learning from the modules of “Teaching of PE” and “Curriculum Studies in PE” favourably. The practical knowledge in forms of pedagogical skills and experience was highlighted as useful and practical. They were impressed by the practical teaching experience in the form of microteaching, which could provide them with an opportunity to use their theoretical knowledge in simulated practical situation. However, most of them had the inclination to relate their remarks with the acquisition of managerial skills. The writings of To and Chung in their reflective journal below illustrate such an articulation. To wrote:

“Teaching of PE” is the most useful module. We encounter different types of teaching PE. We also learn how to maintain good discipline in class and acquire teaching skills. (To)

Chung recorded:

Some of us pretended to be naughty during the class (microteaching session). Ms X told us not to use punishment only, or else, the pupils would lose interest in PE. We have to use some other methods. It is so different from my original thinking. I thought that punishment was the only way to stop any destructive behaviour and now I am beginning to realise that I was wrong. (Chung)

They also claimed that they had learnt how to plan their teaching. They acquired the practical knowledge of designing, analysing and writing the teaching content. Chung valued the brain storming activities, which required them to think deliberately about their teaching. Together with the practical experiences of constructing teaching plans, he became aware that he had learnt more from his peer groups. Lai, on the other hand, was confident that she had the ability to develop the content for teaching because of her

previous extensive involvement in sports. Actually, they were involved in the processes of “interpretative” and “associative” modes of professional learning through practical experience. In the interview, Lai commented, “It is O.K. I don’t think I will have any problems in this module. I know how to write the teaching schemes and lesson plans. I learnt how to analyse the content...I would not have difficulty in selecting activities to teach.” Similarly, Chung said:

We learnt how to plan according to the curriculum studies in PE. We have to know the detailed analysis of each skill, and then to design different teaching activities. We were asked to think out the teaching activities and everyone tried to contribute some. It is wonderful for there are more varieties of activities for us to follow or copy. (Chung)

All participants in this group were confident in their professional learning. They appeared to be predominantly attending to the pedagogical knowledge of the teacher education curriculum as revealed in their remarks made on both the theoretical and practical modules. They selectively showed their particular curriculum expectation in the high skills and the “know how” elements, which directly helped them to learn how to teach. Their preferred mode of professional learning is in the form of practical experiences concerning competitions, training and practices. They expected their tutor to be proficient as their coach, otherwise, their perception of the tutor’s teaching would become less creditable. In this sense, they were relatively custodial in their thinking.

#### **5.4 Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity**

##### **Professional Activity-oriented Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity demonstrated self-initiated and positive professional learning attitude. They tried to learn more and acquire experience from their practical modules:

This group of participants demonstrated the kind of proactive attitude in experiencing their practical modules. Taking their professional learning experience in dance as an example, they considered the professional knowledge presented to them as meaningful and possessed a sense of commitment to pass it on to their pupils. In contrast with the participants with an orientation towards coaching, they regarded their tutors as facilitators. They showed relatively more appreciation of their tutor's performance in providing them with a rich programme. Generally, their determination to pass on such a valuable experience to their pupils is a compliment to the tutor's excellence in teaching dance. In the interview, Siu and Yan expressed respectively,

I never thought that dancing can be such a vigorous exercise. The intensity of exercise is much higher than playing basketball. I learnt folk dances of thirteen countries. I now know more about the characteristics, the culture, the custom, the costumes and the development of them. I have had lots of fun when I was dancing with rhythm and I am willing to pass on this enjoyable experience to my pupils.  
(Siu)

It is very interesting. We all enjoy dancing together. I have learnt different types of dances of different countries and at the same time, I learnt how to teach. It is easy to learn and master the steps. It illustrates that everyone can learn that dancing is fun and I would like to teach my secondary school pupils how to dance.  
(Yan)

Most of them could recall in detail the professional knowledge that they had acquired in the modules. They included the mastery of their practical knowledge in the forms of new physical skills, knowledge of pedagogical know how and the content knowledge of athletics and basketball. They were found to be self-initiated in their learning, regardless of their familiarity with the module content upon entry into the programme and the tutors' performance during the modules. Obviously, "knowing all" is their curriculum expectation and trying to acquire more professional knowledge seems to be their target for professional learning.

Fai and Leung were not familiar with gymnastics and thought that their age and physical capability might not be suitable for doing gymnastics. However, they expressed that it was their obligation to practise and train themselves up in order to facilitate better teaching. Their comments in the interview below signify their sense of commitment to building up professional knowledge that will enhance professional competence:

Oh! Gymnastics is my weakest event. Since I have never been involved in such an activity before, my flexibility is poor and it is difficult for me to perform the skills in perfect and aesthetic forms. But I have tried my best to practise because I know it is important for me to know the event and demonstrate the skills to my pupils before they can master them. I can now master most of the skills in the syllabus. Sometimes, I feel very satisfied because I have mastered many difficult stunts and even performed them aesthetically. (Fai)

I have learnt the varieties of teaching. I learnt how to spot and perform safely. The most important thing in the teaching of gymnastics is safety. It is quite difficult for me, especially since my flexibility is poor. It is very difficult for me to accomplish a gymnastic stunt with perfect poise. However, when it is done, I usually feel good and have a sense of satisfaction. (Leung)

Although they had similar dissatisfaction as the participants with an orientation towards coaching concerning the little professional knowledge that they had gained from the teaching unit of athletics, they exhibited a more considerate thinking in looking for causes of the inadequacies, such as the limited time allotted to the module and the monotonous nature of event. With a more progressive attitude in their professional learning, they were more proactive, in their ways of learning, to improve their teaching. In the interview, Lung said, “Although only some of the events in athletics were taught, he (the tutor) told us that we had to know the skills of each event clearly and observe the safety precautions all the time. I couldn’t agree with him more on this aspect.” In the interview, Siu commented similarly:

I have learnt the basic skills of athletics and some interesting stretching activities. I

think I can use them for teaching and it can arouse pupils' interests in the event. It will be very useful for me because I am going to train the pupils for their athletics meet during their early field experience. Besides, I will have to be one of the officials at the Meeting. (Siu)

### **Theoretical Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity tended to think of the theoretical modules from a broader perspective and expect that studying theories needs great effort:

Similar to the comments that they had given about the professional activity modules, their remarks on the theoretical modules were generally more positive. They were more capable of recalling most of the contents that they had experienced in their professional learning. With relatively more missionary disposition for joining the teacher education programme, their professional learning attitude is more progressive, which would gear them towards the improvement of their professional competence. Among all, Siu had the highest aspiration. She apprehended most of the course content and the values she had experienced. In the interview, she recalled, "During the microteaching, the lecturers gave us some suggestions each time and I tried to remember them. I would like to find out if they were practical and useful or not. It was a real experience of teaching." It was through such experiential learning that she began to acquire her professional knowledge and became aware of the importance of safety precautions in teaching PE. She reflected:

I have learnt some of the techniques of teaching PE like how to plan, how to demonstrate, how to give instructions, how to guide a practice, how to correct and how to evaluate. However, providing students with a safe environment is far more important than just fun and enjoyment. Thus, safety precautions are the most important things in teaching PE. (Siu)

Most of them admitted that they were not very sure about how much they had learnt from the discipline-based knowledge of "Foundation and Principles of PE". Their remarks were different from the other groups for they were more considerate. They were

more liberal and willing to open themselves up to the professional experiences and perceived their learning positively as a means to generate improvement in their teaching.

The following interviewing dialogue of Fai and Yan reflect some of their thinking:

Frankly speaking, I am not very sure how much I have learnt. Before the lecture, I knew nothing about the module of “Foundation and Principles of PE. Then I discovered that it included the history, the trend and the development of PE and Sports. The most interesting topic is the development of NIKE. (Fai)

It mentioned something about the value of PE that had been overlooked by people in the society...Ah...It concerned three teaching domains such as intelligence, emotions and skills. It talked about the theories of learning. We have a better understanding of the status of PE in most parents’ and pupils’ eyes. It provided us with the history and the purpose of PE in education. It can be a great help for me to write my own schemes and lesson plans... (Yan)

This group of participants was self-initiated and proactive in their professional learning. “Knowing all” was their curriculum expectation. They perceived their tutors as the facilitators. They thought that professional learning was a kind of commitment and necessity for being professional competence in future teaching. Regardless of the practical or theoretical type of the modules and their effectiveness in implementation that they perceived, they could recall more contents than the other groups. The good experience they had encountered from dance encouraged them to want to pass it on to their pupils. Although they felt dissatisfaction with the module of athletics, they still tried their best to locate the possible causes and made their professional learning purposeful. Some of them felt inadequate in gymnastics and basketball but they made their best effort to learn and facilitate their future professional performance. In this sense, they were quite progressive in their professional learning attitude.



## **5.5 Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness**

### **Professional Activity-oriented Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness tended to focus on skill acquisition and the activities of the practical modules:

This group of participants had relatively low self-esteem and little confidence to become PE teachers. “Learning what” of the dance, basketball, athletics and gymnastics were their expectation. They commonly articulated the importance of the acquisition of practical knowledge of mastering the skills in the form of episodic incidents. The acquisition of skills and knowledge of activities in the teaching units was their focus. They expected their tutors could help them to master the practical knowledge in the form of skill proficiency, which was largely the result of “replicative” learning and practising. The acknowledgements of “learnt some basic skills” and “acquired some interesting exercises” were their usual remarks on the practical modules. Their relatively low level of skill proficiency may explain some of their problems. In the interview, Man commented, “Folk dancing is very interesting. I have never learnt to dance before. The steps and movements are very funny. We have some happy memories.” Chan said, “I learnt some of the stunts in gymnastics. At least, I’ve learnt some series of movement and what spotting is.” Kuen commended, “It is really excellent. There are so many ways to perform even a simple movement such as a forward roll and I began to like it.”

### **Theoretical Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness perceived the theoretical modules differently according to their individual needs but they all appreciated the practical experiences:

This group of participants had different perceptions, more on the knowledge learnt in the theoretical modules, than the practical ones. However, all of them valued the practical

experiences in their professional learning. Chan claimed in the interview that experiential learning in the form of microteaching enabled him “to acquire the actual skills of being a PE teacher”. Probably, he associated practically with what he was going to teach in the PE lesson. Man also praised his tutor for his advice concerning his professional learning in the form of practical teaching as “useful”. As a self-reflection, it was not until he was involved in the practical teaching situation that he began to be aware of the artistry of teaching PE. This kind of experiential knowledge and deliberation was what he was longing for:

I originally thought that it was so simple to teach and could not understand why other colleagues would have so many problems. When it came to my turn, I realised that it was not so simple as I had always thought. I never thought that we should face the wall when giving instruction so that the voice could be trapped. I have also learnt how to manage the class. Well, the class I taught was too nice. Everyone was co-operative...I think it is a good idea to have some colleagues acting like naughty pupils. I acted as a pupil who had hidden from the student teacher. My colleague did not notice that I was missing. Thus, we have to be very careful about our observation and supervision when we really teach. I have learnt lots of new things and they were useful. Truly speaking, these are what we want and why we joined the Institute. (Man)

Kuen articulated differently in some of his professional learning experiences. According to Kuen, PE should be a practically or physically oriented knowledge. He believed that PE meant practical work. One of the reasons of his claim for learning so little in the module was that “There was no practical work at all.” He talked at length about how he encountered a kind of “conference skills” through an activity of group discussion in the module of “Curriculum Studies in PE”. It helped to train him on how to face the audience and think logically. In fact, he sometimes found difficulty in expressing himself clearly in the public. This might explain why he particularly complimented the activity of group discussion. Kuen said:

The group discussion interested me most. I have learnt how to be a leader and how to organise my points of view during the discussion. There was a chairperson, a secretary, and so on. Each one of us played a different role in the discussion. The best thing about it was that we had to talk and express ourselves in front of an audience, which was good practice. I have never experienced that before even in other subjects. (Kuen)

All participants in this group tended to accept their immediate experience gained from the modules. As they were the less skilful group in terms of sports skill proficiency, they attended more to the “know that” element of the curriculum. Practical knowledge in the forms of the mastery of module contents and physical skills were their major focuses. Man’s report of being fascinated in the dance activities is an example. They were inclined to learn from practical experiences that were fun and in enjoyable learning atmosphere. Thus, it is common to see that they used the terms, “interesting”, “boring”, “happy” and “funny” to describe their feelings in the episodic events. They expected their tutors to act as “instructors” who would help them to acquire the experiences of the skills, activities and affective values through direct involvement. They were less custodial in their thinking. As far as they enjoyed the activities, they thought that they had learnt professionally.

## **5.6 Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations**

### **Professional Activity-oriented Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations showed a distrustful attitude to the practical modules and perceived that all learning should be directed towards how to teach. They tended to find excuses for not being able to perform well:

This group of participants expected that their PE teacher education programme should be pragmatic and everything that they were expected to learn in the programme should be directly related to their future teaching. “Knowing why” of the curriculum was their

objective. Accordingly, they were inclined to distrust the relevance of any content that could not be applicable in their future teaching. Taking dance as an example, all of them conceived that dance was primarily a girls' activity, as they had no such activity in their PE programme during their secondary school days. Although all of them had a positive professional learning experience from it and were convinced that "dancing is very interesting", they still thought that they would not teach it in school. In the interview, Tung recalled, "I didn't know how to dance. Anyway, I have learnt some of the dances. However, I think I will not teach dance because boys are not interested in it. I didn't have any dance lessons during my study in secondary school." Hang expressed a similar opinion saying that:

I am not interested in dance and I think this module should be an optional one. I do not think that the male pre-service teachers will teach dance when they become PE teachers. It is not practical at all. I know that it is not common to teach boys dancing in most of the schools in Hong Kong. So why do we have to waste time on it? ...Boys and girls usually have different interests. I think we should be given choices. (Hang)

They expected that their tutors should be the master craft persons who would show them how to teach. However, when the tutors were not perceived as competent as they expected, they seemed to generate more suspicious comments on the relevance of their professional learning. When commenting on the basketball unit in the interview, Tung worried about the disciplinary problems encountered in class by saying that, "We have learnt how to teach but we are inexperienced in managing the class. I am afraid that I can't teach when the discipline is not maintained in class." Hung questioned its relevance by saying that, "Someone told me that the things (content and activities of the basketball module) we learnt were not practical at all. Why should I practise on something that is not useful? Is it because of the examination?"

With thinking solely on pragmatic considerations, they made adverse comments on the modules and perceived them as impractical. They preferred to have the “ready-cooked” content from all modules so that they could use and teach it to their pupils in school without much deliberation. From the reflective journals concerned with comments on the teaching unit of athletics, Hang noted:

Could they have the lessons better planned? Activities were loosely organised. I learnt nothing from it. It is useless for my coming FE!... What can we do? We just stuck with it and did whatever we were told. ... (Hang)

Tung wrote:

It is disappointing! I gained little from him (the tutor). The module was not very helpful for my future teaching. I just pretended that I enjoyed it during the lessons and that it was. (Tung)

Sometimes, they looked for excuses when they anticipated that they could not manage well in their professional learning. They commonly articulated that they were too old to learn this and that, or the event was too dangerous and pupils would not be interested in it. In so doing, they thought they could escape from being penalised for incompetence. We can see from Hung’s and Tung’s writing in the reflective journals on gymnastics below that they would not pay much attention to or put much effort into their professional learning. Hang wrote:

It is too difficult for me and it is also dangerous for the pupils. All the stunts demand good flexibility. I should have been involved in it when I was young. I am too old for that. I am not going to teach it in my coming FE because pupils won’t be interested in it. It is too hard and boring. I think boys like ball games more. (Hang)

Tung recorded:

It is too difficult. I wonder whether the activities are suitable for boys or not. There are dangerous elements behind. Pupils will be easily injured when performing these

stunts. We did have two colleagues injured in our gymnastic classes. (Tung)

### **Theoretical Modules**

They perceived that theories were essential only when they could be implemented.

Most of them were quite persistent in their way of perceiving the world on pragmatic considerations. They argued and complained about the practicality of knowledge conveyed in the module of “Foundation and Principles of PE”. On the other hand, they related much of their learning in the other modules with utilitarian ends. In their minds, everything taught in the teacher education programme should directly prepare them for the coming FE and how to deal with the school principals and inspectors of the Education Department in their future teaching career. In the interview dialogues, Kwan recapitulated his utilitarian emphasis by commenting that, “The theory sessions (Foundations and Principles of PE) are useful. But when it came to the teaching practice, we could not make use of what we had learnt in these sessions.” Hung also recalled that, “The contents are practical especially the teaching schemes and lesson plans. Sooner or later we will be required to produce our plans for teaching by the school principals or inspectors of the Education Department.”

Kwan, Tung and Hang were inclined towards commenting negatively on their teacher education programme on their socialisation. Although they appreciated the practical knowledge learnt in the modules of “Curriculum Studies in PE” and “Teaching in PE”, they thought that there were always inadequacies such as limited references, unrealistic theoretical knowledge, and impractical writing in the lesson plans. In the interview, Tung grumbled, “Some lesson plans are useful but some are meaningless. For example, why should we have to write so many teaching points for a single activity? They are used to meet the requirement of the inspection of the tutors only, but not for the actual teaching.” The dialogues of Hung and Hang below also reflect most of their inclination to blame others for their faults apart from utilitarian thinking:

The notes of “Teaching of PE” were written in English but the lessons were conducted in Chinese. I have learnt some of the theories and then we had a practical session. Then, I found that not all the theories are useful and practical. (Hung)

... I particularly like the tutor’s demonstration on writing the lesson plan. He did it step by step. However, I don’t agree that we have to insert diagrams of each physical exercise and write so many teaching points for each activity. We won’t have enough time to use all of them in class. (Hang)

This group of participants attended more to the pragmatic value of the knowledge and skills in the modules. They expected their training to be limited to pedagogical knowledge such as writing lesson plans and selecting progressive activities solely for their teaching. Although they experienced very good dance content, most of them said that they would not teach it to boys. They also gave distrustful comments on the practicality of the content of the basketball module. They generated more adverse comments on athletics, simply because the tutors did not provide them with ready-cooked content for their teaching. In this sense, they were very custodial in their perception. They put forward different excuses for not being willing to include gymnastics and dance in their teaching. They would rather prefer to have their tutors as “master craft persons”, from whom they could obtain all necessary professional knowledge to solve their problems in the sports field.

### **5.7 Participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style**

#### **Professional Activity-oriented Modules**

The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style had diversified perceptions of their practical modules:

With the carefree aptitude and shaky character, this group of participants expected to know bits from all their practical modules. It was evident that all of them valued the dance unit for they had mastered the skills, acquired some teaching techniques and improved their rhythmic sense as their professional learning. However, they had different ideas about whether they would teach dance in their secondary schools. In the interview, Kin recalled. “It is interesting and easy to learn how to dance. I learnt to move with rhythm and the tutor praised me in class.” When being asked whether he could still remember some of the dances, his answer was “Yes”. He said confidentially, “I have learnt a lot during the lessons because it was something new for me. I know how to dance with rhythm now.” However, Shing answered with slight hesitation on whether he had confidence to teach dance in school. He said, “It all depends. I am not sure.” Although Ho valued much about what he had learnt from the teaching unit, he expressed that he would not teach his pupils how to dance.

I’ve never learnt dance before and I never knew that it could be so interesting. We must have good memory and be rhythmical. I learnt how to write my first lesson plan. Besides, it helps to develop our organising abilities and creativity. Although it is quite interesting, I don’t think we, boys, will teach folk dance in school. (Ho)

This group of participants expected their tutors to be their role models. The “associative” and “interpretative” were not their inclined modes of professional learning exhibited in the skill proficiency modules. They tended to accept whatever knowledge they received from the modules and were inclined to articulate their comments according to their immediate perceptions. Deliberation of their professional knowledge learnt in the modules was little. No wonder, their diversified remarks on the modules were significant. However, practical knowledge, especially the pedagogical ones through experience in the form of skill practices in basketball, gymnastic and athletics were perceived as valuable



for their professional knowledge. How Kin and Kai enjoyed their gymnastic module can be seen in their positive writings in their reflective journals:

The gymnastic unit was very practical and systematic. We were taught about the themes and selection of suitable movements. We also learnt how to join different stunts together to form a sequence. The lecturer told us some important teaching points, which we sometimes had overlooked. We learnt the important teaching points and the skills. (Kin)

I have learnt a lot more activities when comparing it with athletics. We were taught the progressive stages... Everything is good in this module because there are progressive stages for every stunt. We will not make a mess when writing lesson plans. (Kai)

Sometimes, they tended to articulate their comments in a prevalent way. In some occasions, they just claimed simply their acquisition of theoretical knowledge such as the terminology. Their comments on the teaching content of athletics were more diversified. Most of them expressed their dissatisfaction on the limited scope of what was taught. Ho appreciated the analysing skill that he had learnt. Shing asserted that he had acquired some theoretical content and pedagogical skills of the event although he complained that he had no opportunity to learn some throwing events. He recalled in the interview:

We were only taught some of the events and the lessons were not very well organised. I would like to learn how to do the shot putt and javelin which require more skills. However, only some of the events were taught. .... It reminded us that safety precautions should be observed. We were taught how to deal with different problems and injury. The teaching of hurdling interested me most. We were taught how to do it step by step. We can teach the event even though we just have several skittles or bamboo sticks. (Shing)

## **Theoretical Modules**

Practical experience changed their conceptions concerning the theoretical modules:

Most participants in this group acknowledged positively the values of the practical experience in their professional learning that they came across in the modules of “Teaching of PE” and the “Curriculum Studies in PE”. For them, their experience in microteaching made them realise what teaching was. It was an experiential learning and changed their conceptions about teaching PE. For Shing and Ho, they experienced that knowing and doing meant two different things. It was not until they were involved in the actual teaching that they became realising what they had learnt. Shing and Ho recalled in the interview:

...The module provided us chances to practise (teaching) before FE. The tutors gave us advice on improving teaching skills... Before the practice of teaching (in the microteaching), I thought that it was so simple to teach and could not understand why other colleagues were having so many problems. When it came to my turn, I knew that it was not as simple as I had always thought. I learnt much about teaching from it. Having experience is much better than just learning its theories. (Shing)

I have learnt a lot of PE teaching from this module... The microteaching session forced me to face the crowd. Although they were our colleagues in the teacher education programme and differed greatly with those pupils in schools, we gained confidence in facing an audience. After the try-out teaching, I understand that teaching is not that simple. A PE teacher has to know how to organise, to manage and to communicate. I learnt how to teach and it is good that our weakness can be pointed out immediately. Thus, we can have a clear picture of teaching and make improvement afterwards...(Ho)

A criticism that they all made was they did not understand much of the theoretical knowledge in the module of “Foundation and Principles of PE” because the subject was difficult. They could hardly remember any of the content and did not feel that they had acquired any professional knowledge from this module. Apart from the problem of the

medium of instruction, the comments from Shing illustrate that there was little deliberation of associating and interpreting the concepts with local context. In the interview, he complained, “I got to think about it. What Dr.X taught us was difficult. I think we ought to have worked as a group on the project about the trends of the development of PE in Hong Kong.”

Ho knew that the module was useful but he blamed himself for not being able to acquire any knowledge from it. We can imagine how frustrated Ho was from his writing in the reflective journal:

It was too difficult for me. I did not understand most of it, especially as it was taught in English. It was really a difficult subject. But, how can a PE teacher know nothing about it. We, PE teachers, have to rely on much of this knowledge. The more we know, the better it would be. Actually, I really don't understand it. It is so difficult. (Ho)

This group of participants were relatively adaptive and easygoing pre-service teachers. What they expected from the curriculum was to know the bits from all modules. They tended to articulate some forms of positive learning such as the practical knowledge of skill mastery in dance, the acquisition of pedagogical concepts in basketball, and the mastery of something in athletics and gymnastics. However, they were inclined to exhibit more diversified perceptions in their acting. Some perceived their learning as a sense of commitment. Kin's articulation of his willingness to teach dance was an exceptional case. Most of them decided not to teach a particular skill although they were impressed by the performance of the dance and gymnastic units. Thus, their perceptions were rather shaky and imprecise. They regarded their tutors as role models and practical experience was their preferred learning mode.

## 5.8 Summary and Discussion

Different groups of participants developed distinct perspectives while going through the PE teacher education programmes in their first six months of study. The findings in this study phase indicate that the participants had a wide range of expectations of their study programme and their tutors. This is in accordance with the findings of Graber's (1989).

The participants with orientations towards coaching, teaching affinity, apprehensiveness, pragmatic considerations and an easy-going style demonstrated different modes of learning patterns. Their expectations of their PE teacher education programme curriculum varied. They are "knowing how", "knowing all", "knowing that", "knowing why" and "knowing bits from all". The range of roles expected from their tutors included "skilful sportspersons", "facilitators", "instructors", "master craft-persons" and "role models".

They all preferred to learn from practical experiences, which were their learning mode, than from theoretical ones. The participants with an orientation towards coaching treasured the practical experiences through competitions, training and practices. They particularly attended to the pedagogical content of the teaching modules. The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity favoured both the practical and theoretical knowledge. Those with an orientation towards apprehensiveness liked to engage in activities that were considered as funny and enjoyable. The participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations would only enjoy those practical experiences that they considered to be relevant to their future teaching while those with an orientation towards an easy-going style expected to learn more from all practical experiences.

They were also found to exhibit differences in their attributes to professional learning. The participants with an orientation towards coaching were confident and pretended to participate actively in order to get along with their tutors. Those with an

orientation towards teaching affinity demonstrated their progressive, self-initiative and considerate learning attitudes. The participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness showed lack of confidence and were inclined to accept their immediate learning experience. Those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations had a distrustful view of their professional experience gained from the teaching modules. They tended to look for excuses for not being able to perform well. The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style were inclined to perceive their learning in diversified ways. The differences in curriculum expectations and the professional learning of different groups of the participants are summarised in the following table:

Groups-Participants with orientations towards	Curriculum expectatio	Expectations of Tutors	Preferred learning Modes	Professional learning attitudes/ Personality
Coaching	Know how	Highly skilled in sports	Competitions, practices, training and pedagogical knowledge and skills for teaching	Confident, pretending to participate actively for getting along with their tutors, custodial
Teaching affinity	Know all	Facilitators	Practical and theoretical professional learning experience	Progressive, self-initiated, considerate, proactive, trying to learn more
Apprehensiveness	Know that	Instructor	Practical experiences with fun and enjoyable learning atmosphere	Lacking of confidence, accepting immediate experience
Pragmatic consideration	Know why (pragmatic and practical)	Master craft-persons	Practical experience identical to their future teaching	Possessing distrustful view on the relevance of the modules, looking for excuses for not being able to perform well, custodial
An easy-going style	Know bits from all	Role model	Practical experiences	Possessing easy going and diversified views on professional learning, carefree and shaky

Table 7: Differences in expectations of different groups of participants of their teaching modules.

Different groups of the participants had their own ways of perceiving their professional learning. There was always dichotomy between remarks on different modules. There were complimentary remarks as well as disparaging ones. However, what all the participants concerned most seem to be the teaching itself. Obviously, the effectiveness of the tutors' teaching was decisive in influencing participants' perceptions

of their learning in the PE teacher education modules. “The Dance Unit”, “the Gymnastics Units”, “the Curriculum Studies in PE” and “the Teaching of PE” modules were perceived by most of the participants as beneficial to their professional enrichment. A review of participants’ remarks illustrates several characteristics that they attributed to the success of their implementation. They included rich course contents with practical knowledge for the acquisition in skills, theoretical knowledge and pedagogical know-how integrated in practical and interesting experiential learning. During the implementation, the modes of replication, associative, applicative and interpretive were involved. They are the modes of professional learning that the participants preferred. The findings provide important messages about how teacher education can be implemented successfully.

The participants overwhelmingly articulated their professional learning with pedagogical knowledge and practical experiences in both the professional activity and theoretical modules. However, they had difficulties in recalling in details their theoretical knowledge illustrate the issue of their preferred mode of professional learning. Moreover, most participants expressed that they would not include dance in their PE teaching although they found the unit interesting. This represents another issue relating to the social construction of dance in Hong Kong. The two issues will be picked up and discussed in Chapter VIII at the end of this thesis.

The findings of this professional orientation phase illustrate how knowledge and skills were communicated to the participants. It shows us how the participants incorporated such knowledge into their teacher perspectives, and how they learnt through their practical experiences rather than from the theoretical concepts presented to them in the process of building up their professional knowledge. The next chapter is titled the “First School Experience Phase”. It will provide the analysis of how the participants experience and negotiate their first teaching experience in secondary schools.

## **Chapter VI**

### **The First School Experience Phase**

## 6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected from “the First School Experience Phase” scheduled near the end of the participants’ first year study. This is regarded as the third phase of socialisation in this investigation. During this phase, the participants were placed in the secondary schools to have their “supported teaching practice” for five weeks. Their “teaching practice experience” is considered to be the main socialising agent. Analysis of their experiences should provide us with a better understanding of how pre-service PE teachers interact and negotiate with the various socialising agents in field settings in schools. The following questions have served as a guide for conducting this phase of investigation:

- Do different groups of participants continue to socialise in distinctive ways?
- How do they socialise in their field settings?
- What do they believe in the purposes of PE?
- What qualities do they see as important for PE teaching?
- How do they solve their teaching problems?
- How do they perceive the impacts of their supporting teachers and tutors?

After this introductory section, there is a discussion of recurrent themes, in terms of three socialisation constructs namely, professional conceptions, socialising strategies and agents. The third to seventh sections provide a description of the socialisation process of each group of the participants. The chapter ends with a summary that shows the insights into how the participants’ teacher perspectives are shaped. It also explains the participants’ preferred mode of professional learning and the dynamics of the FE arrangements in the Hong Kong Institute of Education.



## **6.2 Recurring themes of socialisation constructs**

During this phase of study, in the interviews, each participant was asked to report their anticipated perceptions and experiences before and after the FE. They were also invited to recall their critical incidents in the reflective journals. They could describe how they managed their problems, and identify the consequences of their teaching actions, as well as how they felt about them in their FE. Information explaining the details of the placements arrangement, levels of the classes employed, types of schools, number of PE periods and the teaching content of the participants can be found in Appendices 18 and 19. Samples of the interview and reflective journals are included in Appendices 20, 20a and 20b.

In the previous socialisation phases, the participants were categorised into five groups: orientations towards coaching, teaching affinity, apprehensiveness, pragmatic considerations and an easy-going style according to their teacher perspectives. Their physical attributes and attitudinal dispositions were found to include different levels of physical prowess, confidence to become PE teachers and career choice. Their conceptions of a successful PE teacher, their notable PE experiences and their curriculum expectations differed distinctively in accordance with their orientations.

From the content analysis of the scripts of the interviews and participants' reflective journals, it can be seen that different groups of participants exhibited distinctive ways of how they were being socialised in the field settings. Their teacher perspectives were extended and found to focus on three socialisation constructs. They consisted of professional conceptions, socialising strategies and socialising agents.

### **6.2.1 Professional Conceptions**

Professional conceptions refer to the participants' views about the purposes of PE and what should be required of PE teachers to perform their teaching successfully in schools. Drawing upon the works of Doyle (1979), Tousignant and Siedentop (1983) and

Tinning and Siedentop (1985), teachers should possess instructional, managerial, organisational and social task competences in order to cope successfully with the complex teaching situations. Instructional task competence is related to the participants' teaching capability, such as skills and knowledge in giving instruction, presentation, demonstration and supervision. Managerial task competence indicates the ability of the participants to manage pupils and equipment for effective teaching and learning. Organisational task competence consists of PE teachers' ability to plan tasks such as writing teaching units or lesson plans. It also includes the ability to set up the facilities for teaching. The social task competence is mainly concerned about the participants' skills in establishing and maintaining cordial relations with the supporting teachers, tutors, pupils, principals, janitors, or other teachers.

### **6.2.2 Socialising strategies**

Socialising strategies refer to measures and mechanisms that participants adopted to tackle their socialisation experience (FE in this case). They may simply be regarded as the participants' mode of professional learning within which they acquired their skills and knowledge necessary for PE teaching. On the other hand, they may also be viewed as the way that the participants responded and resolved dissonance in their socialising experiences. Lacey (1977) and Graber (1989; 1991) suggested that socialising strategies were human agency and activities that participants adopted to empower themselves to respond to their training environment and to acquire professional knowledge.

### **6.2.3 Socialising agents**

Socialising agents are referred to as notable features or incidents perceived by the participants as critical change agents in shaping their teacher perspectives. They can also be the participants themselves, the supporting teachers, the tutors, the pupils and the personnel in the schools. However, at this phase, the participants seemed to be influenced

mostly by the FE in their socialisation processes. The following is the discussion of the major findings generated from the different groups of participants:

### **6.3 Participants with an orientation towards coaching**

#### **Professional Conceptions**

The participants with an orientation towards coaching changed their views on PE teachers from “bringing fun to pupils” to “emphasising the survival skills of managerial, social and organisational task competences”:

Before the FE, this group of participants articulated the purpose of PE with its cathartic role of providing pupils with “happiness” and “fun”. From the very beginning, they tended to act according to their preconceived teacher perspectives regardless of the conflicting messages conveyed in the teacher preparation programme and the field sites. Similar to the discussion of O’Reily et al (2001), the words “fun” and “happiness” are complex, ranging from the meaning of “an end in themselves” to the inclusion of “pedagogical issues” which serve as motivators to attract pupils into the activities. The “fun” and “happiness” elements later facilitate pupils’ acquisition of skills and cultivate positive attitudes and participation. However, most of the participants did not see PE so much as an academic subject and “fun” was regarded as an end in itself. In the interview, Chung identified the purpose of PE as:

PE lessons should not be the same as academic subjects. Why can’t we turn the basketball court into the children’s playground? Pupils should play and learn in the playground happily. Let the pupils enjoy themselves. I don’t care much about the aims or objectives of the lesson. I just hope that they can have fun in my lesson. (Chung)

All of them had confidence in meeting the challenge of the coming FE. It appeared that they associated their achievement in sports as the basis for anticipating

what their FE would be like. Their confidence came from their perspectives of themselves as athletes rather than those of the PE teachers. In the interview before the FE, Chung was proud to say that he was good at basketball and could master the skills that he was going to teach. To anticipated that he would not have any trouble with teaching the kids athletics, gymnastics and other physical activities for he could perform good demonstrations and had “good track record”. Lai perceived that she might have difficulties because she was arranged to teach in a “band five” school, which was known for poor academic achievement of the pupils. However, she believed that she was special and had been well-prepared for tackling her pupils’ behavioural problems. In an assertive manner, she appraised herself in the interview before the FE:

The teacher has warned me about the poor discipline of the pupils. My first job is to make them sit down and listen to me. So, I will start the lesson with fitness training. Of course, it won’t be the same as what they usually do. I will let them play fitness games. They can have fun doing fitness exercises but they have to obey my orders at the same time. I think I will be OK. (Lai)

When encountering the FE, all of them were troubled and frustrated because they had discovered their weaknesses. In the reports of their critical incidents after the FE, Chung recorded that he was frustrated about not being able to tackle his pupils’ discipline problems. He had to face groups of pupils who showed low motivation in PE and were chronic “non-suits”. To wrote that the noisy teaching environment caused him much trouble in giving clear instruction. The mode of the lesson in the form of “organised recess” adopted by the PE teacher and the pupils’ lack of discipline aggravated his problem too. He ended his report by stating desperately that, “Teaching PE was not an easy task at all.”

Lai was very disappointed by the lack of the equipment and the poor discipline of the pupils. She recorded the incident of her trouble with the school janitors. It made her understand the importance of maintaining cordial relations with the personnel in school.

Her report illustrates the feeling of this group of participants that they could be so helpless in the FE. Lai wrote:

**Incidents:** The space and facilities were inadequate. We had to share the sports equipment with the primary school session. All the benches were located in the sports hall on the second floor but I was assigned to teach in the basketball court downstairs. Whenever I needed them, I had to ask the school janitors to carry them for me and put them back afterwards. There were lots of complaints about me from the school janitors because I increased their workload... Moreover, the discipline of the pupils was poor. Twenty out of forty did not bring their PE uniforms. They all longed to have PE lessons conducted as “organised recess”.

**How to manage:** I had to stop using those benches by altering my teaching plans...

**Consequences and Feelings:** What else could I do? ...

The statements of “I was very frustrated” from To, “It was quite hopeless” from Chung, and “What else could I do” from Lai, illustrate how disturbed they were. They experienced the kind of “reality shock” as identified by Veeman’s (1984). It signified the collapse of their idealistic conception of tackling their FE as sports training and achievement. The harsh reality of PE teaching made them see more clearly the job of PE teachers. They began to be aware that their personal attributes of physical prowess as “fit, strong, skilful and active” and practical experiences with pedagogical emphasis were inadequate for teaching PE in school. As revealed in the interview after the FE, they broadened their conceptions from focusing on the “good skill proficiency” to including those survival skills related to “managerial”, “organisation” and “social competences”. In the interview, Chung said, “Good skill proficiency in a PE teacher is important, or else, we cannot show our pupils how to do it. However, a good PE teacher still needs to handle the discipline problems of the pupils.” Lai expressed,

Having good skill proficiency, adequate preparation and good relationships with the pupils are not the only elements of being a good teacher. We have to maintain good relationships with the teachers and the school janitors as well. Moreover, a good PE

teacher knows how to manage her pupils with disciplinary and motivational problems. (Lai)

### **Socialising Strategies**

They adjusted themselves internally in their professional learning:

Their failure in not being able to solve their problems in the FE caused them to adjust themselves internally in their professional learning process. They began to realise that having sports skills proficiency only could not meet the requirement of good PE teaching. In the interviews after the FE, they recalled how they tried to learn from mistakes in their FE. Lai said, “I have learnt some teaching methods, the ways of organising the activities and the best utilization of the facilities.” Chung expressed, “I discovered my weakness during the FE. It was the ability to manage the class.” To articulated, “My learning in the modules for teaching skills is not enough.”

According to the work of Lacey (1977), pre-service teachers adjust internally and selectively choose aspects they wish to imitate, probably those closely matched with their personal teaching perspective. In variance with his studies, this group of participants in the present study appeared to have been shaped from their custodial thinking of trusting nothing except themselves, to a more progressive orientation by beginning to open them up to advice and suggestions. Later we can see from the section of the socialising agent how they changed drastically from distrusting their socialising agents to acknowledging the kinds of professional learning from their supporting teachers and tutors.

### **Socialising agents**

The socialising impacts of the supporting teachers and tutors began to gain position in the eyes of this group of participants:

Before the FE, they believed that they could tackle the coming FE with experiences of their achievement in sports. They anticipated that they would have relatively few

problems and regarded themselves as the best among the participants. Accordingly, they distrusted the supporting teachers and never expected much from them again.

In the interview, they commented adversely on their supporting teachers after the pre-FE visit to the schools. The hurdler, To, said, “I really don’t think I have received much guidance...He won’t tell me anything voluntarily. I have to ask first.” The basketball player, Lai, also criticised the attitude of the supporting teacher and said, “The teacher seldom teaches. She just lets the pupils have free activity all the time.” Deep in Lai’s mind, she perceived herself as the best.

Moreover, the teacher education programme seemed to have weak socialisation impact on their preconception. Their coaches were still their influential agent when they anticipated the challenge of the coming FE. In the interview before the FE, Chung amplified the lasting impact of his coach as the socialising agent concerning the desirable attitude towards pupils. His dialogue below represents most of the perception of this group of participants in this aspect:

The teacher is OK. But I don’t like the way he shouts at pupils. As my coaches said, ‘Those naughty children are used to being scolded by adults. They will have no fun or interests in training.’ It is cruel to scold these pupils in the PE lessons, which are supposed to be the happiest time in their school life. (Chung)

However, they became frustrated when they were not able to solve the problems in school by themselves. Naturally, they had to turn to someone for immediate help. No wonder they changed their attitude by acknowledging positively the professional support of their supporting teachers after the FE. To recalled how he modelled and learnt from his supporting teacher in the interview:

The PE teacher gave me a demonstration of teaching a PE class when I was in trouble. I found that his lesson was very interesting. The skill proficiency of the teacher in volleyball impressed me most. He is capable of motivating the pupils

through his remarkable demonstration. He helped me to urge the pupils out of the changing room as fast as possible. He helped me to select the teaching content and taught me how to use the whistle properly in order to establish the class routine. It worked in such a noisy teaching environment. (To)

As revealed in the interviews after the FE, they also perceived positively the socialising impacts and the professional advice offered by their tutors concerning their professional learning. The kinds of professional advice included “offering suggestions for selecting interesting activities” (Chung, To), “pointing out the weaknesses” (To, Lai) and “providing advice on how to establish better relationship with pupils” (Chung). Lai was impressed and her dialogue below shows the expectation of this group concerning their professional learning from their tutors:

The lesson was conducted in the classroom. It was in the form of a quiz concerning sports knowledge and the pupils had to answer the questions quickly. He (the tutor) told me that I should pay more attention to the passive pupils. It was true and I never noticed it myself. I hope he will come for another supervision especially during those practical teaching in the field because I have too many problems. I would like to learn more about how to select interesting activities when there is a lack of appropriate equipment and how to establish good relationship with the school janitors. (Lai)

The participants with an orientation towards coaching experienced the “reality shock” during their FE. They were saddened by pupils’ discipline problems and poor commitment to learning in PE lessons. Confronted with the dissonance between their sports achievement orientation and the realities of PE teaching, they began to be aware that their personal attributes of physical competence in terms of “fit, strong, skilful and active” and practical experience with pedagogical emphasis were inadequate for teaching PE in school. They adjusted themselves by shifting their focus from “bringing fun to their pupils” to “the survival skills” concerning the managerial and social task competences in



handling pupils' misbehaviour and the **social competence in working with** the janitors in the schools. They **gradually opened themselves up to the socialisation influences of the supporting teachers and their tutors**. On the whole, the first school experience broadened their custodial thinking solely in terms of **sports coaching but shattered** their confidences in become PE teachers.

#### **6.4 Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity**

##### **Professional conceptions**

The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity continued to put the stress on a variety of task competences:

Before the FE, the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity articulated in the interview that they would promote pupils' "learning" (Fai, Lung, Yan, Siu and Sim); "joy" (Fai, Lung, Sim); "relaxation" (Lung); "good citizenship" (Fai) and "physical fitness" (Siu) through PE. Fai's dialogue was an example of what PE should be like for this group of participants. He stated proudly, "I intend to bring joy to my pupils through interesting physical activities. Most important of all, there is something for them to learn. I hope I can provide them with good guidance so that they will become good citizens in the society."

Unlike the participants with an orientation towards coaching, they illustrated their desire to apply what they had learnt in the teacher education programme on promoting the learning of their pupils in their interviews before the FE. It is not surprising to see Siu's comment as, "Of course, there is something for them to learn in each lesson". Sim said, "Most important of all, they can learn what I teach according to the lesson plans. The objectives are important for guiding what we have to do in a PE lesson."

They were confident in meeting the challenge of the coming FE. They perceived positively their FE as another opportunity for their professional learning and striving for

knowledge. An analysis of their dialogues from the interview before FE revealed that their confidence came from “appraising their strengths and weaknesses” (Fai, Lung, Siu, Sim); “having a clear idea of the purpose of FE” (Fai, Yan, Leung); “modelling of their secondary school PE teachers” (Fai, Lung, Sim); and “having acquired knowledge and skills about how to teach from the teacher education programme” (Fai, Leung, Sim). Together with those proactive efforts including “having good preparation” (Lung, Siu, Sim) and “seeking advice from their significant others like the parents and the supporting teacher” (Yan), they thought that they would be able to tackle their anticipated problems. With positive expectations, Fai offered his comment in the interview:

I have learnt how to teach from the Institute. I shall adopt some of the instructional and managerial skills that my secondary school teacher used to do. In fact, the purpose of FE is to provide us with an opportunity to teach. I shall try my best to teach and learn from mistakes and experiences. (Fai)

With their positive teaching attitude, five of them successfully tackled the pupils’ behavioural problems in the FE. Fai was pleased to see a group of pupils, who had poor discipline, improve their self-image. Lung, Leung and Yan made good attempts at dealing with pupils’ misbehaviour while Siu solved her instructional problems.

All of them were conscious of those factors contributing to successful PE teaching and they quickly picked up a wide spectrum of criteria needed for carrying out the job of a PE teacher. They indicated in the interview after the FE that those criteria were the instructional capabilities (Fai, Lung, Yan, Leung, Siu, Sim); personal qualities such as charisma, good knowledge and sports skill proficiency (Fai, Lung, Leung, Siu, Sim), competences in managing the pupils (Fai, Yan, Leung), organisation skills as planning for teaching (Fai, Yan, Sim) and social tasks for establishing cordial relationships with others (Fai). In the interview, Sim concluded:

A PE teacher should understand pupils’ needs and interests. He/She should be

knowledgeable and interested in the subject. He/She should possess the capability to give good instruction. Moreover, the ability to motivate and promote pupils' learning is important. (Sim)

Consequently, they were happy to record in their critical incidents reports after the FE that the discipline of their pupils was improved in the direction of being more "obedient"; "cooperative"; "attentive"; "enthusiastic" and "keen in activities".

### **Socialising Strategies**

They adopted reflection, improved their teaching and employed reasoning approaches as the socialising strategies:

This group of participants also experienced a lot of problems in their FE, which included having troubles in their teaching and problems of pupils' discipline. However, they were found capable of adopting a number of strategies for solving them. Firstly, they tended to adopt the "reasoning approach" (Hardy, 1999) in dealing with their pupils' misbehaviour, within which pupils were invited to consider their behaviour in a mature way rather than simply being told to obey. Some evidences can be seen in their reports of the critical incident written after the FE: Siu wrote, "I usually kept records of the excuses of not attending the PE lessons and talked to my pupils immediately after the lesson...". Leung recorded, "...for some of the serious problems such as fighting or emotional unrest, I would try to calm them down and talked to them after school..."

Secondly, they were keen on searching for different ways to improve their teaching. In the reports of the critical incidents after the FE, Lung wrote, "...I told them my expectation every time. I have tried my very best to teach them...." Leung recorded, "...through better understanding and amending the teaching content according to the pupils' suggestions, their discipline and participation improved ..."; Yan noted, "...I tried to teach with varieties and allow every pupil ample opportunity for practice...."

From the analysis, it was found that they tended to acquire their professional skills and knowledge through their reflection. It involved processes of being sensitive to the issues, reflecting on the causes and alternatives, shaping actions in accordance with the situations and generating learning from the experience. It illustrates the kind of reflection in and on actions as identified by Schon (1983) in their professional learning.

This group of participants demonstrated a progressive view of teaching within which managing pupils was conceived as a part of a larger instructional problem rather than as the means for controlling the pupils. Similar to the teachers in a study conducted by Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984), they perceived learning as holistic and related to the teachers' role in deciding what to teach as to be more functional. They also illustrated their capability with greater autonomy and confidence as suggested by Graham (1991b).

Their self-initiative, considerate and positive character may partly explain their progressive view of teaching. It may be the case that their PE experiences in their secondary school had a civilizing influence upon them. Perhaps, they tended to imitate and extend what their role models, in this case, their secondary school teachers, were doing. Fai's report on his critical incident after the FE below illustrates how they tackled their problems positively and rationally:

**Incidents:** It was embarrassing when I saw them (the pupils) punished by the disciplinary master every day. Some of them told me that they wanted to give up because they thought that the teachers and other pupils looked down on them.

**How to manage:** I tried to help them by talking to them after school. They did not trust me in the beginning. Luckily, most of them liked to play basketball and there was an inter-class competition at that time. I became their coach voluntarily and we won. I rewarded them with some soft drinks. I tried to improve their sporting ability so that they could build up their self-image. I usually stayed behind and played games with them. I sought advice from the teachers and the deputy head of the School about how to deal with their problems...

**Consequence:** They were very happy and we became friends at last.

**Feelings:** After the FE, I realise that it takes time to understand pupils and we have

to be very careful when handling them. I really enjoyed the teaching practice and I have gained a sense of achievement... I gained good experience in teaching. It is necessary to have such practice in our teacher training. (Fai)

Consequently, they had success in improving the pupils' skill proficiency, self-image and personal instructional skills. At the end of their writing, they often articulated their satisfaction and a sense of achievement in a sentimental way. Leung wrote, "I was happy with this practical experience." Yan recorded, "I got a sense of achievement" and Lung wrote, "I missed them (his pupils) very much." Their success in solving their problems in their FE consolidated their dispositions of progressive thinking and non-dominant liberal attitude in their behaviour. The experience also positively reinforced their existing progressive orientation towards teaching affinity.

### **Socialising agents**

This group of participants generally perceived positive socialising influence from the supporting teachers and tutors:

"Learning to teach well" continued to be their main target. All of them showed an understanding attitude and appreciation of the help offered by their supporting teachers for their professional learning before and during the FE. In the interview after the FE, Siu said, "I don't mind if he (the tutor) likes my lessons or not. I will try to learn more and put in new things in my practices of teaching." Leung expressed, "It would be more beneficial if I could have more chances to learn from him (the tutor)..." Yan recalled, "We (the supporting teacher) met once and it was good for at least I knew what his expectation was." The comments signified their positive conception about the supervision process. To a certain extent, their acknowledgement of gratitude illustrates their courtesy towards people.

All of them actively opened themselves up to the socialisation influence of the

supporting teachers and tutors. They accepted advice concerning teaching ideas, managerial hints and administrative arrangement of the schools. The supporting teachers and tutors offered them advice on managing the class (Lung, Fai, Sim, Yan, Siu), observed their lessons (Lung, Fai, Yan, Sim), provided information on how to deal with the trouble makers (Lung, Sim, Leung), discussed with them on the teaching content (Siu), helped in setting apparatus (Sim), and enriched their PE knowledge (Yan). Below are the dialogues of Lung, extracted from the interview after the FE, illustrating the kinds of support that he gained from his supporting teachers and tutors in his professional learning:

The supporting teacher gave valuable advice on managing the class during the teaching practice. He even told us about the background of some troublemakers. He observed my lessons six times and provided me with valuable advice for my teaching... (Lung)

Mr X (his tutor) gave me a lot of useful comments too. He reminded me that I should catch up with the progress planned. He suggested to me ways to dismiss the class in an orderly way. I appreciate that he has given me many suggestions for improvement. (Lung)

They continue to develop their orientation towards teaching affinity with high job satisfaction and strong identity of their work. They tended to adopt a progressive view of teaching and try to improve their instructional skills in dealing with their pupils' misbehaviour. They are more capable of identifying a relatively wide spectrum of competence namely personal characteristics, organisational, managerial, social and instructional skills required for teaching PE. Being socialised through the process of reflection on teaching performance and evaluation on their strengths and weaknesses, they had a clear idea of the purposes of FE. For them, PE teaching meant promoting of pupils' learning. Their socialising agents involved the pupils, the supporting teachers, the

tutors and the teacher education programme. Generally, the FE provided them with satisfaction and achievement, which in return, consolidated their progressive teaching orientation, strengthened their conceptions of the subject and reinforced their learning attitude.

### **6.5 Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness**

#### **Professional Conception**

This group of participants shifted their beliefs about the important requirements of PE teachers from emphasizing their “intuitive conception” to stressing “good skill proficiency and instructional competence”:

Since this group of participants belonged to the less skilful group, they obviously had not gone through any rigorous training as had those with an orientation towards coaching. Their experience in sport, therefore, was confined to their PE experiences in the primary schools. All of them had a rather vague impression of their secondary school PE teachers. They had little recall of any of their significant qualities and work. The articulation of the notable experiences with their primary school PE in the pre-training phase, to a certain extent, illustrated similar feelings. Without much concrete experience, they seemed to rely on acting and thinking as a pupil. It is common that pupils usually associate their “good” teachers with someone who was popular in school. In congruence with the articulation of Feiman-Nemser and Flooden (1986), “being liked by the pupils” is common among all teachers. This is particularly true for this group of participants in this study. In the interview before the FE, Man just wanted to be liked by his pupils and Kuen thought that he would not have any problems in his coming FE if he was welcome by his pupils. Chan further supported the perception of the PE teachers from the perspective of the pupils by saying that “I think the most important thing is to have a good relationship with the pupils or else they won’t listen to me. I was a pupil before, so I knew that pupils won’t listen to a teacher whom they don’t like.”

Without much deliberation in the interview before the FE, Chan expressed confidently, “I have gone through so many PE lessons during secondary school. Why should I not teach well?” Man and Kuen also had similar ideas that they would not have any problems in the coming FE. They viewed PE teaching as the passing down of experience only.

Naturally, with limited participation in sports and teaching, they relied much on their microteaching experience of the teacher education programme when tackling their coming FE. They imagined that their microteaching experience could easily be transferred to the coming FE. They believed that if they had not encountered any problems in their microteaching then they would do well in the coming FE. Man’s dialogue extracted from the interview before the FE expressed exactly their intuitive conception. He stated confidently, “I think there won’t be any problems for me. I remember what I have learnt in the microteaching, I won’t let them play during the PE lessons if they are naughty. Then, they will behave themselves.” However, they failed to anticipate that such experience was inadequate for the actual dynamics of teaching situations of PE in school.

During the FE, they experienced the realities of PE teaching. In the reports of the critical incidents after the FE, they recorded quite a number of problems with their pupils including poor discipline (Chan, Man, Kuen), showing no interest in PE (Chan, Man) and paying no attention to teacher’s instruction (Chan, Kuen) and disrespect to the pre-service teachers (Kuen). The reports of their critical incidents written after the FE recorded how they tackled their problems desperately without much success. The writing from Kuen below signified how his confidence was shattered by the reality of the FE:

**Incidents:** On the first day, I was not welcome by the pupils because I did not look like a PE teacher by appearance. They also laughed at me for I did not speak clearly. I was really frustrated...I did not do well during the volleyball lessons. I could not meet the tutor’s requirement...

**How to manage:** I, myself, am not interested in volleyball at all. I practised playing



volleyball every evening.

**Consequences:** I felt very bored because I had my practice alone and I could not make much improvement. I tried to make up an excuse for not playing volleyball with them many times.

**Feelings:** I think that I am incapable of becoming a PE teacher. (Kuen)

They experienced the kind of hegemonic influence of sports and PE culture in school as suggested by Sage (1990). It favoured those with strong physical build-up and high skill proficiency. The cruel physical culture operated publicly in PE more than other subjects simply because pupils' responses to their PE teachers' instruction in the forms of movement skills were readily observable.

Their inadequacy in skill proficiency and unimpressive physical outlook were unable to please their pupils. They then realised that relying on establishing good relationships with the pupils and aiming just at "being liked" by the pupils were not enough. In the interviews after the FE, all of them were found shaping their perceptions on the requirement of PE teachers in teaching with "good skill proficiency" for impressive demonstration and effective skills for giving clear instruction. Chan's interviewing dialogue of "A PE teacher teaches in a very different environment from other subject teachers. Being friendly, good in sports and giving clear instruction are important criteria for a PE teacher" clearly illustrates his awakening. Man said in an assertive manner, "Good at sports is important." Kuen had similar articulation:

A PE teacher should be skilful. I asked the pupils the same question. Most of them gave me the same answer. You have to give them clear instruction and good demonstration. If you want to teach them how to sprint, you have to run faster than they do. (Kuen)

### **Socialising Strategies**

The adoption of having an impression projection for gaining pupils' cooperation was their major socialisation strategy.

As revealed in the interviews and the reports of their critical incidents, this group of participants were found to have encountered problems of pupils' discipline and having experienced their own inadequacy of skill proficiency and physical image. They stated that they had attempted a variety of impression management techniques to handle their problems. They tried to improve their skills in order to be able to give a better demonstration (Kuen). They put on clean and tidy sportswear (Chan). Then they played basketball with the pupils after school (Chan). They talked to them during recess (Chan). They tried to persuade their pupils and even begged them (Man) to be cooperative in class.

In examining pre-service PE teachers' studentship (set of behaviour of pre-service PE teachers employed to progress through the training programme with greater ease, more success and less effort) in two teacher education courses, Graber (1991) discovered that the participants consciously fronted and projected their favourable image in subtle and imaginative ways to those who controlled evaluation. However, this group of participants in this study, attempted to portray a better image to the pupils whom they thought would affect their teaching performance. They demonstrated their skills and behaviour just to please their pupils in order to be taken more favourably. They tried hard to gain pupils' cooperation. However, they might be distancing themselves from engagement with issues that demanded reflection and resolution.

Consequently, they all admitted that they failed to obtain pupils' full cooperation. In the critical incidents report after FE, Chan recorded that "The pupils sometimes showed good responses in class and the lessons occasionally ran smoothly". Man noted, "The situation had not been improved." The subsequent writings of "I felt a bit helpless" from Man and "I think that I am incapable of becoming a PE teacher" from Kuen illustrated that they were quite desperate in handling their teaching problems. They were quite distressed when they realised that they had failed in solving problems even using a variety of strategies. However, the failure caused them to realise their inadequacy to become PE

teachers in their professional learning in field settings. Consequently, they determined to prepare themselves better for the next challenge in the teacher education programme. In this way, they would shift their learning attitude to a progressive one.

### **Socialising agents**

They perceived differently in addressing the influential role of the supporting teachers:

This group of participants perceived the professional support offered by the supporting teachers on their professional learning differently. Before the FE, they still had their intuitive conception of what their FE would be like. In the interviews before the FE, Man expressed his satisfaction by saying that “the teacher helped me a lot” while Kuen acknowledged the positive attitude and recognition that he had received from the supporting teacher. They were all happy to have information concerning their coming PE teaching and the freedom of choosing their teaching content. Such an option enabled them to select from their relatively limited skill proficiency repertoire. On the other hand, Chan complained about his supporting teacher for not conducting the PE lessons properly. He worried about the inadequate information simply because he could not reach him again after the first visit.

During FE, they were quite desperate when encountering sport field realities. They had to seek whatever help they could get to survive in their chaotic PE teaching. Naturally, the supporting teachers became their immediate source of support for their survival. In the interviews after the FE, they valued the frequent lesson observations made by their supporting teachers and the constructive suggestions that helped solving some of their problems in PE teaching. They even expressed that just the presence of the supporting teachers would help to stop any disruption in class. Unconsciously, they had opened up their professional learning to the influence of the supporting teachers. Chan originally did

not like the supporting teacher but conveyed such feelings in the following dialogue:

When I was teaching, he (the supporting teacher) came to observe my lessons frequently. His presence helped me a lot because the pupils behaved better in front of him. He also offered me valuable comments concerning how the pupils could be managed more effectively. (Chan)

However, they were rather frustrated when they had received little help from their tutors of whom they originally had much expectation for solving their problems. The socialising impact of the tutors on them is little when compared with that of the supporting teachers. In the interviews after the FE, they complained that it was not possible to monitor their progress in PE teaching through only one supervisory visit. Drawing upon Pease's (1984) metaphor, some tutors, in their eyes, seemed to be acting like trouble-shooters, much like retail salesmen representing a company and making round "once" to the stores in his or her territory to make sure that everything was in order. Accordingly, the tutors completed all their assigned supervisory visits in a hurry and disregarded the post observation discussion. Some were just incapable of providing specific and constructive feedbacks that would initiate improvement in PE teaching. On the whole, the participants perceived little impact that their tutors had on their socialisation into field settings. Man complained in the interview after the FE, "Not much advice and help were offered by my tutor". Kuen commented, "Mr. X gave me little advice". Chan offered a full picture on what his tutor's supervisory visit was like:

My tutor came to supervise me once only. He just wrote something in general, such as. 'good demonstration', 'good organisation' and 'good warming up exercises'. They are not useful at all. I found that he could not point out my problem of managing the class. I could even discover the problem myself. He did not need to mention it at all. He could not give me real help. Praise is important but useful suggestions on teaching are necessary for me. I want to learn and improve. (Chan)

It is quite surprising to see that little reference was made to the microteaching experience that this group of participants related most with their apparent confidence before FE. The “wash-out” effect (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1981) of the teaching realities on the teacher education programme, in particular, the microteaching experience, was quite significant for them. For them, PE teaching meant confirming their image as PE teachers. They tended to use impression management technique by projecting a better image of themselves to the pupils at first. However, they all admitted that they were not successful because of their unimpressive physical appearance and low skill proficiency. Such a failure acted as the critical change agent, which caused them to evaluate their preconception of the requirement of PE teachers in teaching. As the result, they shaped their conception from “being liked by the pupils” to “obtaining teachers’ qualities of good skill proficiency and instructional competence”. After all, they were through at last though in the hard way.

## **6.6 Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations**

### **Professional conceptions**

The participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations tended to maintain managerial and social task competence as the important requirements for PE teaching:

All of the participants in this group observed the rules of the game closely. Their aim was to get a pass. In the interview before the FE, they expressed that they would adopt a tough managerial approach so as to ensure that everything was in order and under control during their PE lessons.

They understood that they did not have much strength in PE teaching, and they were also uncertain about the challenges they might have to face in the coming FE. In the

interview before the FE, they commonly expressed their worries in terms of “excited”, “frightened” and “nervous”. They were afraid that they were not able to give good demonstrations and would be challenged and looked down by the pupils. Some of them were even anxious about teaching the girls. They were alerted to the unfavourable elements that would possibly affect their grading. Kwan illustrated his concern in the interview before the FE:

I am really nervous and excited. I begin to tremble now. I hope I won't be failed. Moreover, it is not fair to me for I have to teach the girls and boys at the same time. I may be downgraded or even failed if I can't manage the class especially the girls, properly. (Kwan)

When encountering their FE, they experienced a variety of problems with pupils. In the reports of their critical incidents completed after the FE, all of them recollected how they handled their pupils' discipline problems including being challenged by the pupils. They had to face pupils' problems of poor discipline, uncooperativeness, impatience and disruption. Hang complained in his writing:

The pupils liked to challenge me...their behaviour was a great problem for me. They were not co-operative because they did not like to work in the small groups they were assigned to. What they liked was free activities. They showed impatience all the time...”.

Kwan wrote:

**Incidents:** I found that it was very difficult to motivate the girls and the pupils behaved so badly that...

**How to manage:** I stopped all misbehaviour of the pupils immediately, punishing them by making them do push up and run laps. I told them I would not expect too much from them as long as they behaved properly...

**Consequences and feelings:** I think I was OK for my FE. (Kwan)

It is not surprising that all of them maintained that the managerial task competence for the up-keep of law and order is an important requirement for PE teachers in teaching as they anticipated before FE. Besides, they also articulated the importance of social task competence in the form of “communication” similar to the human relation capabilities (already expressed in the pre-training phase) for gaining the proper dialogue with the pupils.

### **Socialising Strategies**

They focused on controlling and building up authority in order to solve their dissonance in the FE:

They realised that the tutors were the most decisive persons in shaping their destinies, as so did the supervisory visits. Accordingly, they perceived that their performance during that critical period could be crucial. Capel (1998) studied the intensity and causes of concern of the pre-service PE teachers in England. The participants in her study were found to be most concerned about the evaluative criteria. Similar to Capel’s (1998) study, this group of participants tended to adopt a kind of “psyching out” strategy, which was suggested by Lacey (1977) and Graber (1989). They picked up and acted according to the hints regarding to what pleased their tutors and the demands of the FE. In the interview before the FE, Tung’s illustration of his tutor’s visit expressed exactly the concern of this group of participants. He commented proudly, “I don’t care how the pupils behave during the rest of the time. There must not be riots during my tutor’s supervision. I shall try my utmost effort to prevent any of these from happening, so I will take a very tough line in managing them.”

As all of them experienced discipline problems in the FE, they had to struggle hard to regain their confidence. So, they quickly linked to their view of themselves as authority by taking immediate punitive measures as a way of getting respect from the pupils.

Push-ups, sit-ups, running laps and isolation were commonly recorded as means of stopping any misbehaviour in class. They intended to keep everything under control for building up their authority, then the law and order in their lessons and eventually their confidence.

This group of participants thought that they had to have authority over the pupils through forcing pupils to comply with teachers' directions. In their mind, the pupils' capability to be self-disciplined could not be trusted. Their satisfactions in PE teaching related primarily to the upkeep of the discipline, order and organisational efficiency. They tried to make their authority felt. Tung's writing of the critical incidents after the FE illustrated how he successfully made his pupils become compliant.

**Incidents:** There were a few pupils who were disruptive ...Once when I was teaching the class basketball, six pupils who always misbehaved in class tried to challenge me. They said that they wanted to play football instead. Then they ran out of the court without my approval.

**How to manage:** I immediately ran up to them and stopped them by blowing the whistle. After that, I isolated them and made them stand within the area of some hoops and punished them by doing sit-ups and push-ups.

**Consequences:** Although they were unhappy, they never tried to challenge me again. I set up rules and regulations quickly. Pupils should stick to them totally, nothing more and nothing less...

**Feelings:** I felt happy when the pupils began to behave well after a few lessons.

Most important of all, they could get through their FE. The successful experience became the critical change agent, which shaped them towards the custodial control orientation (Templin, 1979) in managing the pupils. However, it was likely that their early teaching concerns about pupils' control would lead them to react only to situations rather than initiate preventive actions. Ironically, they thought that they had acquired the managerial skills in tackling their pupils' discipline problems through "practical experience" in the field settings. In the interview after the FE, to a certain extent, Tung



amplified their taken-for-granted authoritarian conception:

The PE teacher should have power. You cannot teach if the pupils misbehave. It is something that cannot be taught through teacher education programme. It is something that you have to gain from experience. Teachers should work hand in hand to deal with the trouble-makers, as discipline is the most important criterion of a successful PE lesson. (Tung)

### **Socialising agents**

The socialising impacts of the supporting teachers and the tutors were few for this group of participants:

Before the FE, they thought that they had fully figured out their anticipated challenges in their FE schools and it was quite useless to listen to any suggestions that could not directly help them to get a pass. In fact, what they had obtained from their tutors and supporting teachers were quite useful and practical. However, they did not value it much because it was not the “magic key” for the door of passing through the FE. Hung’s dialogue from the interview before the FE below pinpointed exactly their desire. She commented, “What the supporting teacher and the supervisor had told me was some general information about my planning for teaching, handling pupils and providing instructions. Why didn’t they tell us exactly the criteria of our assessment?”

Such perception was maintained throughout their FE. In the interview after the FE, they commented unfavourably on the supporting teachers regardless of the kinds of assistance they had been given in their professional learning, which included the provision of practical advice on managing the pupils and giving instruction (Hang, Hung and Kwan), the presence in class for keeping discipline (Hung), and observing their lessons (Hang, Hung and Kwan). Their distrustful view on the supporting teachers may be due to their original sceptical aptitude or their success in handling discipline problems independently. More important, what they all aimed at was to get a pass and any

suggestions for improving their PE teaching were not their major concern. These may also be the cases where their supporting teachers were incapable of helping them in instructional development.

On the other hand, they perceived their tutors to offer little help in their professional learning. Unfavourable remarks on their tutors were revealed in their interviews after the FE. They thought that their tutors provided them with general feedback (Hang, Tung, Hung and Kwan), criticised their performance adversely (Tung), and performed only one supervisory visit (Hung). However, some statements like “Why should I have to bother too much. I am through?” from Tung and “He (the tutor) awarded me a pass and I have felt great relief since then” from Hung, illustrate their pragmatic conception on the supervision. Obviously, as long as they got a pass, they would not care about anything else. Hang’s interviewing dialogue below exemplified the custodial aptitude of this group of participants on their professional learning:

The tutor read my lesson plans and told me where I should make corrections. I followed the recommendations although I disagreed. He just said, “Well done!”  
“Well done!” That was all I needed. (Hang)

The participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations perceived PE teaching like managing and keeping law and order. Through adopting the “psyching out” socialising strategy of acting in accordance with their tutors’ requirement, they successfully passed through their FE. Their success in dealing with the pupils’ discipline problems through the use of the punitive approach consolidated their authority and their custodial control orientation. They only believed that managerial tasks and communication were important requirements for PE teachers in teaching. They expected little help from their tutors and supporting teachers for their professional learning in their FE. They would neither strive for improvement as in the case of participants with an

orientation towards teaching affinity, nor fight for higher achievement as in the case of those with an orientation towards coaching. Their custodial and instrumental orientations were reinforced as the result of their first school experience.

## **6.7 Participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style**

### **Professional conceptions**

The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style moved from “emphasizing the importance of managerial task competence” to “establishing good relationship with the pupils”:

Although the participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style did not have much expectation of themselves and the subject of PE, they knew that the FE was pre-requisite for continuation of their teacher education programme. Before the FE, they tried to search for information concerning what their FE would be like from a variety of sources. Naturally, they would take their notable incidents concerning their unpleasant experience in secondary schools into account. Even though they did not agree with how unfairly their PE teachers treated them during PE lessons, the memories of how effective their PE teachers managed their misbehaviour through a punitive approach was still fresh in their mind.

They also tried to seek suggestions by all possible means. In the interview before the FE, Ho said that his supporting teacher reminded him to close the door immediately or else some of the pupils would run away. Shing said that he had received the message “the pupils in the school never listened to the student teachers” from others. Kai also expressed that “My peers suggested that I should be friendly but firm.” These pieces of dialogues vividly illustrate their overall pessimistic feelings of pupils’ discipline, which would be problems they would have to tackle in the coming FE.

Apparently, they began to think that good managerial skills were necessary in handling the discipline problems but not the “instructional competence” that they articulated as important for PE teachers in the pre-training phase. As expressed in the interviews before the FE, Shing and Ho anticipated that they should have good control over their classes. Kai thought that he would be unable to teach if pupils misbehaved and thus discipline was his first concern. Kin thought that it would be wonderful if he could manage the class properly in his coming FE.

After the FE, what they could recall most was their unhappy experiences. In their reports of the critical incidents, they expressed that they were embittered by numerous frustrations. The way of conducting PE lessons in the form of free activities by the supporting teachers and the inapplicable mode of teaching PE suggested by the Institute made teaching difficult and confusing for them. Besides, pupils’ discipline problems such as spending too much time in the changing room, ignoring orders and instruction, performing skills dangerously and requesting other activities frequently during the PE lessons caused worry and anxiety. Shing illustrated such articulations as critical incidents in the reflective journal after the FE. He wrote:

**Incidents:** The pupils were very naughty. I was very frustrated because the pupils ignored my instruction and order. They performed certain skills dangerously...

**How to manage:** I had to use different methods to deal with them. Sometimes I had to be strict and sometimes I had to be kind... However, if they were good, they would have more time for playing...

**Consequences:** The pupils became more co-operative for they knew that they could have more time on free activities when they behaved well.

**Feelings:** I only hoped that the teaching practice could be ended as soon as possible.

They found that by relying solely on the “managerial competence”, they were unable to solve all of their teaching problems. Because of the realities in the sports field, they

quickly picked up the social task competence of getting along with the pupils, establishing good relationships with the supporting teachers and conforming to the demands of their tutors. They perceived that such cordial relationships were important in facilitating their class management, seeking help easily whenever necessary and most important of all, favouring the assessment during the supervisory visits. It could be illustrated by their unanimous articulation with an element of “friendliness” for establishing “good relationship” with the pupils as important for PE teaching in their interviews after the FE. Ho’s articulation illustrates most of the conception of the participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style in this aspect: Establishing good relationship with the pupils is important. “If we treat them (the pupils) nicely, they will be cooperative and behave themselves in PE lessons...Why shouldn’t a PE teacher be friendly?”

### **Socialising strategies**

They complied with the pupils and tutors strategically to resolve their dissonance in the FE:

Being troubled by the pupils’ discipline problems and the confusion between a formal PE lesson and an “organised recess”, all of them tended to tackle the problems by adopting the reconciliation and compliance with the tutors’ requirement. In the reports of their critical incidents after the FE, they stated that they had tried to please, compromise, reconcile, sanction, reward and punish their pupils for their misbehaviour in their PE lessons. Among the measures, they favoured the strategies of compromise and reconciliation most. Then, they succeeded in gaining the cooperation of the pupils and having the class under control. Ho’s case was a good example. He allowed his pupils to have more free time if they behaved satisfactorily. He wrote:

**Incidents:** Pupils of all classes usually took a long time to get dressed ... Apart from the dressing time, there were always some pupils hindering my teaching. They did not follow my instruction and it took time to gather them together. ...

**How to manage:** ...I told them that if they were good, I would try to finish teaching the athletic earlier and let them enjoy a free-activity. ...

**Consequences:** It worked and the pupils got changed much faster.

**Feelings:** ...nowadays, kids are seldom considerate.... (Ho)

Because of their adaptive character, they gradually understood that meeting the demands and complying with the requirement of the tutors and the Institute strategically was the best way to survive in their FE. Ho included dance in his teaching to suit the requirement of his tutors by saying that, "I taught them dance as assigned by my tutor. The pupils tried to reject learning dance at first, but I insisted. What else could I do? I had to fulfil the requirement of my tutor." Kai stuck closely to the programmatic expectation of the Institute although he did not favour such practices:

As required by the Institute, I had to teach a lot of skills in a double lesson. Actually, it is quite impossible. Once, when I had planned to introduce two modified games in a lesson, I just chose one when I discovered that the time was running short. The result was encouraging. The pupils could accustom themselves to the routine set by me... However, I dared not to try it during my tutor's supervision. (Kin)

Besides, being pre-service teachers, they fully understood their position and status. Kai amplified exactly the feelings of the group by saying that, "I told the pupils that I was sorry that I had my teaching practice in their school and they had to be taught by a stranger for a month. It was against my will but I had to meet the requirement of the Institute and the tutor."

As they did not have much expectation of themselves and the subject, they would not care much about the rationale and the logic behind their practice. They were found to

be easily influenced by the prevailing PE practice in their schools. Accordingly, they ignored and sometimes even queried the programmatic perspectives and the effectiveness of the teacher education. At least three of them questioned the usefulness of the microteaching experience. Ironically, such experiences were commented favourably in the professional orientation phase. Kai's dialogue showed their doubt on the practicality on parts of their teacher education programme:

The microteaching in the Institute could not give us a real picture of how the pupils behaved and reacted. In fact, the pupils were far worse devils than we thought. Second, the two-single period teaching scheme was not really practical. It could not arouse the pupils' interest because they had to spend the first ten minutes in getting changed. Then, it took time to set up apparatus. Thus there was not much time left for practice. I had cut some of the teaching steps in order to catch up with the time. It is very difficult to achieve this goal. (Kai)

In the interview after the FE, Kai said, "I was so happy when the supervisory visits were all over. I could teach what I liked and what I wanted a PE lesson to be". Kai's dialogue illustrates the "getting the work done" conception of this group of participants while solving the problems was another business. They were inclined to take on the prevailing PE practices in school as their professional learning. They retained their reservations instead of applying and testing the practices advocated by the Institute. It is not surprising to see the significant "wash-out" effect of their FE on teacher education programme. The FE appeared to shape their orientation towards a more custodial direction.

#### **Socialising agents:**

They shifted their attitude towards their socialising agents from "distrusting" to "acknowledging" the help received from the supporting teachers on their professional learning. However, the tutors' influence was still inadequate.

Before the FE, most of them were busy searching for information about what their supporting teachers would be like. They tended to perceive things from their first

impression. Two of them reported that their supporting teachers were either absent from school (Shing) or in a hurry (Kin) when they had their pre-FE visits to the school. They complained that they did not have enough time to seek all the necessary information for their coming teaching. Generally, they thought that they had only obtained the information about the facilities available for PE teaching (Kai, Ho), the school administration (Kai), some hints concerning his teaching and the PE practices adopted in the school (Kin, Shing), and the characteristics of the pupils (Kin, Shing). Three of them perceived that such information was inadequate and was of little to them in preparing for the FE.

However, they responded differently during the interviews after the FE. They all expressed that they appreciated the full support of the supporting teachers in their professional learning. Their adaptive and conforming characteristic caused them to approach for whatever help they could get to deal with their practical problems in PE teaching. Luckily, their supporting teachers could offer them professional support immediately. Perhaps, their supporting teachers were those who were responsible and willing to take up their mentorship role unconditionally. They said that they had a lot of opportunities to learn from the supporting teachers through observing their demonstration of conducting a PE lesson (Shing, Ho and Kin), or receiving advice on managing the pupils (Shing and Ho), giving instruction (Ho), writing teaching plans (Kin, Ho) and having the proper attitudes towards pupils (Kin). They reported that they always found their suggestions and help constructive, practical and supportive. It appears that the socialising impacts of the supporting teachers on this group of participants are strong. Below is the dialogue quoted from the interview after the FE to illustrate how tactful one of the supporting teachers was:

The PE teacher showed me the routine of having PE lessons in the school. He hid himself somewhere near the playground. He would not come out unless I needed



help. He let me teach and handle the pupils' problems first and discussed with me afterwards. He told me that I should keep good discipline before teaching. I learnt a lot from him. (Shing)

Similar to the group with orientations towards apprehensiveness and pragmatic considerations, three of them complained that they had received little help from the tutors concerning their professional learning. They criticised the supervision of their tutors adversely with regard to offering comments that were too general in nature (Kai and Shing), providing little positive feedback for future improvement of teaching (Kai and Shing), having the supervision visit in a hurry (Shing), causing more stress to them (Kai) and having contradictory views on teaching among the tutors themselves (Kai). In the form of an open-ended statement, Kin illustrated his dissatisfaction with their tutors by saying that, "The Institute should provide us with necessary information and useful technique in teaching in real classroom. I think the tutor should...I don't know." On the whole, they did not perceive that their tutors had impacted on their socialisation in the field setting.

The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style were more capable of finding an easy way to get through their FE successfully. They adopted a variety of strategies in order to please and compromise with their pupils, to conform to the demands of their tutors and comply with the requirements of the Institute. They questioned the effectiveness of the teacher education programme and the programmatic practices advocated by the Institute. As with the participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness, programmatic "washout" was particularly significant for them. The social task competence was perceived as an important requirement to fulfil the job of a PE teacher and to survive in school. Apart from the supporting teachers and the prevailing PE practices in schools, they would be less likely to open up themselves for the influence of other socialising agents.

## **6.8 Summary and Discussion**

In the “first school experience” phase, different groups of participants continued to exhibit commonalities in testing and shaping their teacher perspectives. The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity were successful as they could maintain and consolidate their positive and progressive aptitude towards teaching. Those with an orientation towards coaching experienced the shock of the teaching reality. They understood that they could not rely solely on their sports achievement experiences. These experiences reminded them of the need to focus more on the learn-to-teach process. The weaknesses of those with an orientation towards apprehensiveness were intensified. The participants with pragmatic considerations had stuck to their instrumental orientations while those easy-going participants followed closely what was being practised in schools. These two groups of participants succeeded in getting through their FE and tended to have adopted a custodial attitude by assuming that their successful teaching in the FE could be applicable to all teaching situations.

As regard to the professional conceptions of the participants, the group with coaching orientation did not show any changes in their conception of having fun and enjoyment for their pupils in PE lessons. However, they understood that they could not achieve this goal without possessing the necessary managerial and social competences. Those with an orientation towards teaching affinity retained the promotion of learning for pupils in PE classes. They knew that a wide spectrum of managerial, instructional, organisational competences and personal attributes would be required. The apprehensive participants shifted their intuitive belief of “being liked by the pupils” to practical concerns of “the good skill proficiency and managerial competence” after experiencing the real situation of teaching. The participants with pragmatic considerations had high regard for managerial skills while those with an easy-going style thought that having the social skills to establish good relationship with others would be important for PE teaching. Three groups of participants, namely groups with orientations towards apprehensiveness, pragmatic

considerations and easy-going style had concerned themselves only with solving problems they faced in PE teaching. They did not have much concern about the purposes of PE.

All the participants tended to adopt a variety of strategies to resolve the dissonance that they encountered in their FE. The strategies included:

- adopting an internal adjustment to resolve the shock of the teaching reality;
- using the reasoning approach;
- controlling and building up authority in dealing with their pupils' behavioural problems;
- employing reflection upon how to deal with their problems in teaching and learning;
- projecting better images to their pupils;
- “psyching out” to pick up and act according to the hints regarding the preferences of their tutors;
- compromising with their pupils; and
- complying with the requirements of their tutors and the demands of the Institute in order to make their way easier.

The successful and unsuccessful incidents concerning the participants' teaching and professional learning throughout their FE were the critical change agents that helped to shape their teacher perspectives. The changes in the participants' teacher perspectives resulted from their “first school experiences” are summarised in table 8.

Apart from understanding the participants' socialisation processes in the field settings, an observation regarding the micro dynamics of the FE practice in the Hong Kong Institute of Education is to be discussed in this study phase. The Institute took the initiative in gaining the incorporation of the “supporting teacher” in the FE. The supporting teachers would serve as co-learners-collaborators-facilitators (Slick, 1998). The design of the FE had been shifted from the uni-dimensional approach to the

complementary form of institute-school partnership. All participants (except those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations) found the supporting teachers' advice useful for their teaching and professional development. The findings support the effective function of the supporting teachers on facilitating pre-service PE teachers' professional learning in FE as illustrated by similar studies conducted by Brunelle et al (1981); Paese (1984); Richard (1990); Jones (1992), Hardy (1995) and Hynes-Dusel (1999).

Participants with orientations towards	Professional Conceptions (Purposes of PE/ requirements for a PE teacher)	Socialising Strategies (Means of handling dissonance)	Socialising agents (Socializing events and people)
Coaching	-Bring fun to pupils maintained. -From relying on physical prowess to survival skills in terms of managerial and organisational task competence	-Internal adjustment	-FE as unsuccessful experience that opened up their custodial aptitude -Tutors -Supporting teachers
Teaching affinity	-Promoting learning, joy, relaxation, physical fitness, good citizenship for the pupils -Managerial, instructional, social, organisational task competence	-Reasoning approach -Improving teaching -Reflection	-FE as successful experience that consolidated their progressive teaching aptitude -Tutors -Supporting teachers
Apprehensiveness	-From perceiving being liked by the pupils to rely on physical skill proficiency and instructional competence	-Impression management technique	-FE as an unsuccessful experience intensified their inadequacy to become PE teachers -Supporting teachers
Pragmatic considerations	-From human relation capability to managerial and social task competence	-Controlling and building up of authority	FE concerning successful experience in managing pupils that reinforced their custodial aptitude
An easy-going Style	From instructional to social and managerial task competence	Compromise reconciliation and compliance	-FE as an successful experience that consolidated their "getting the work done" conception -Supporting teachers

Table 8: The summary of the changes in aspects of the teacher perspectives for different groups of participants resulting from the first school experience.

On the other hand, the participants with orientations towards pragmatic considerations, apprehensiveness and easy-going style had relatively fewer remarks on their tutors. Their comments on their tutors' advice and suggestions given were "of little value", "failed to hold them accountable for making changes to their teaching methodologies and strategies", "set little target for improvement", "provided little

feedback on observed teaching” and “failed to help them to link up the learnt theories with the practical applications”. Moreover, most of the participants opined that only one supervisory visit was not enough and the tutors appeared to be the “overseer” and “gatekeeper” (Slick, 1998). Obviously, the participants were not satisfied with such an arrangement of supervision. The findings from this phase of study do not suggest that tutors are significant socialising agents for pre-service PE teachers as compared with the results of the studies conducted by Zimpher et al (1980) and Ocansey et al (1992).

Moreover, as suggested by Burton (1998), the institute-school partnership model may shift the purpose of teaching practice supervision from “assessing” to “advising” pre-service teachers’ on their professional learning. Besides, a close collaboration and constant dialogue between the Institute tutors and supporting teachers is essential for the effective implementation of the partnership model. However, relatively few evidences of such reforms could be found in this study phase.

The participants were directly engaged in the job of PE teachers in schools in spite of how they perceived their socialising agents, namely the critical incidents, their tutors and supporting teachers. Their positive or negative remarks illustrate their preferred mode of professional preparation and learning. Their comments offer valuable insights on the conceptualisation and the design of FE, which will be discussed and picked up in Chapter VIII.

On the whole, the three socialisation constructs of “professional conceptions”, “socialising strategies” and “socialising agents” help to categorise the constitutions of participants’ conceptions like how their views of PE teaching were being formulated, and how they were changed in the FE. They provide a framework for analysing the participants’ teacher perspectives. The findings from this piece of work can help to illuminate how different groups of pre-service PE teachers interacted and negotiated their socialisation experiences in the dynamic and dialectical field settings in schools.

After the “first school experiences”, the participants would continue to develop their teacher perspectives through the second year of teacher education programmes and their final teaching practice experience in schools before graduation. Findings concerning “How these groups of participants would further develop, how they would experience their second FE, how they socialised the job of PE teachers, and what salient changes on their teacher perspectives would be” are to be investigated. The subsequent chapter titled the “the Professional Reorientation Phase” will present such issues in full.

## **Chapter VII**

### **The professional reorientation phase**

## **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter is concerned with an analysis of the data of the “the professional reorientation phase” which is the last data collection phase as outlined in this thesis. In this study phase, the participants continued to socialise and re-orientate their teacher perspectives when encountering with their professional preparation programme including the second FE. The analysis aims at tracing continuously the socialisation processes through tracking different groups of the participants, following their teacher perspectives and elaborating their professional learning.

The subsequent section of this chapter provides general remarks on the preliminary analysis. It is then followed by discussion of the data analysis of how each group of the participants experiences their teacher education programme. The chapter ends with a summary tracking the teacher perspectives of different groups of participants.

## **7.2 Remarks Generated from the Preliminary Analysis**

The professional preparation programme of the second year study in the Institute composes of seven credit bearing units and an eight-week school experience. A professional activity and four theoretical modules are included to familiarise pre-service PE teachers with academic, pedagogical and managerial knowledge and skills for fulfilling the job of PE teachers in school. The professional activity module titled the “Skill Proficiency 1” covers common core activities namely creative movements, badminton, swimming and handball. The four theoretical modules include “Motor Learning, “PE Administration in Secondary School”, “PE Evaluation in Secondary Schools” and “Basic Anatomy and Physiology”. All modules are conducted in the third and fourth semester before the second FE. A brief overview of the teaching modules is included in Appendix 21 for reference.



Apart from teaching modules, it is arranged for the participants to practise their PE teaching “independently” in schools for eight weeks at the end of their second year of study towards graduation. As supported by Furlong & Maynard (1995), the organisation of the second FE intends to facilitate pre-service teachers’ progressive development after the first FE. Pre-service PE teachers are expected to learn the complexities of practical teaching, to relate their practice to their educational values, and to evaluate and enhance their teaching independently.

It should be noted that the data were collected at the end of the fourth semester immediately after the second FE. At that time, the participants were busy in writing application letters for a teaching post. The sample of the interview guide and the reflective journal are attached in Appendix 22 and 23 respectively. The class levels, the teaching contents, the total number of PE lessons and the types of the schools in which the participants were placed during their second FE are summarised in Appendix 24.

Based on preliminary content analysis and constant comparison, participants’ perceptions of their teaching modules were found to be similar to those findings of the professional orientation phase. Thus, data concerning their professional learning from the modules were discussed holistically instead of module by module. More important, participants were found socialising with the recurring theme of “socialisation constructs” covering professional conceptions, socialising strategies and agents in accordance with respective groups. Below is the discussion of their socialisation process according to their respective groups.

### **7.3 Participants with an orientation towards coaching**

#### **Professional conceptions**

This group of participants’ conception of important criteria for PE teaching transformed from perceiving sports skill and sportive appearance to managerial and social

competences. Their belief in the purpose of PE changed from “bringing fun to pupils” to “focusing on motivating pupils to learn”:

As illustrated in the previous socialisation phases, this group of participants associated “bringing fun to their pupils” as the purpose of PE teaching. After experiencing the reality of their first FE, they began to perceive the “survival skills” in terms of managerial and organisational competences as important requirements for the job of the PE teacher instead of their physical prowess.

The collapse of their early idealism of associating sport achievement with PE teaching in their first FE exerted considerable dialectical impacts. They immediately picked up their socialising pace by opening themselves up to their subsequent teacher education programme. At the beginning of the interview, they commonly articulated how they experienced learning and how such experience could be further enriched. Lai recalled that she had a better understanding of her own weaknesses after the first FE. She said in the interview: “...I tried to evaluate my teaching performance (of the first FE). I would do a lot better than I did last time.” On the other hand, To showed his regret by saying that:

Frankly speaking, the PE modules especially the practical ones are quite useful. I attended to most of the content especially the ones like ‘how to organise’ and ‘how to present the skills to the pupils’. I began to realize the usefulness of the teaching hints this year. I should have paid more attention at the beginning of the course. (To)

In the second FE, they extended their professional conceptions from “bringing fun” to “promoting learning for their pupils”. This latter insight was the programmatic message that was ignored by them in the first FE. As illustrated in the interview after the second FE, “motivating pupils to learn” and “committing pupils to being involved in their teaching activities” were recalled frequently as the purposes of their PE teaching. Similar to the articulation of O’Reilly et al (2001), “fun” in the mind of this group of participants

was not only an end in itself but also a motivator for attracting pupils' interests in their teaching activities. It helped to promote learning.

Perhaps a guilty conscience drove this group of participants to articulate teaching with motivating pupils to learn and treated it as one of the important requirements of fulfilling a PE teacher's job. Being athletes, they had experienced tough training for improvement in order to reach the top level. They could naturally transfer such experience to their teaching and strove to improve themselves when solving their teaching problems. They took responsibility for not being able to motivate their pupils to participate and learn actively in their PE lessons. In the interview, To related such a conception by saying that, "Pupils should find the lessons interesting and have a sense of achievement. I think a PE teacher should know how to plan interesting activities. More important, he should have the capability to make the pupils work...". Lai had a similar opinion and said, "She (the PE teacher) should be good at giving instruction and demonstration. She should know how to convince others to work ...." Gradually, they shifted their professional conceptions from "self-contained" to a more progressive view of attending to "pupils' learning".

### **Socialising Strategy**

Apart from adjusting themselves internally, these participants tended to adopt a variety of socialising strategies in resolving their teaching difficulties. At the same time, they continued to attend to the pedagogical knowledge of teacher education programme:

In the previous socialisation phases, this group of participants were found to adjust themselves internally in resolving their shock at experiencing the reality of teaching. They tended to attend to the pedagogical knowledge in terms of the "know how" elements of the teacher education programme and preferred their professional learning in the forms of practical training, competitions and performance.

As revealed in the critical incidents reports written after the second FE, they experienced more serious problems of teaching including pupils' disruptive behaviours (Chung, To, Lai), their failure to motivate the pupils (Chung, Lai) and the inadequacy of PE facilities (Chung, Lai) when compared with their first FE. However, they were found to be more capable of solving their teaching problems by evaluating their own practices, improving their teaching and impressing pupils with their sports skill competence.

These participants were pre-service teachers who had heroic aptitude and fighting spirit. They regarded any failure as "losing face" and would try their very best to prevent it from happening again. In the second FE, they tried to assess their teaching so as to ensure quality. In the reflective journals, To recorded, "I continuously did self-evaluation on the problems of my teaching..." Chung wrote,

I thought of them (the problems) over and over again. I tried to understand what my pupils thought and needed... I took the pupils' abilities into consideration when writing my lesson plans. I think I gave instruction more clearly and the lessons were better organised. All these were the competences that I was not able to do in my first FE. (Chung)

They also tried to solve their problems by improving their teaching. They designed more interesting and challenging activities (Chung, To, Lai), had good preparation beforehand (Chung), tried not to give lengthy instructions in class (Chung, To, Lai), sought comments from the pupils concerning their teaching (Lai) and paid more attention to the girls (To). Below is To's writing in the reflective journal. It illustrates his eagerness to solve his teaching problems by adopting a variety of means:

I tried a variety of ways to tackle the problems. I once took a tougher line by demanding more of them. I tried to design some interesting activities in order to motivate them. I moved the apparatus out of the PE room before the lessons. I tried to give less instruction and let them have more time to practise. I paid more

attention to the girls and gave them clearer instructions...(To)

Besides, they found that their excellent demonstration was an effective means to inspire their pupils to learn. Their talent could be the envy of their pupils and it helped to establish a better base for learning. In fact, their ability to perform high-level physical skills formed a central aspect of their identity, which revolved around the image of competent sportsperson and able performer. It is a kind of social institution of the “athlete” experienced by the participants and the pupils. In the interviews, Chung said proudly, “I just showed them a straddle sit and pushed up. They were so astonished and told me that they could not do it. Then they all tried hard to practise.” To recalled eagerly, “I tried my best to demonstrate the skill of triple jump to them and taught them step by step. I discovered that most of the pupils participated wholeheartedly.”

Although their results of the FE were not totally satisfactory, they began to gain the kind of satisfaction and sense of achievement from their experience of solving teaching problems and being tough as PE teachers. In their reports of critical incidents, To recorded, “Although it did not work effectively at the beginning, the situation concerning their discipline did improve later and I regained my confidence again....” Lai regained her heroic sensation and said in the interview after the FE that:

When I found that my pupils acquired what I taught after my demonstration, I gained my confidence again. The pupils became more interested in my lessons. The result made me feel happy. I hope that I can appear as a superwoman in front of my pupils... On the whole, teaching is challenging...(Lai)

Concerning the professional learning, all of them did not change much in their pedagogical-focused curriculum expectation. Practical modules with pedagogical knowledge were still highly commended. In the interview after the second FE, Chung commented, “The teaching unit of handball was quite OK. We have acquired enough

knowledge and skills to teach in secondary schools.” To said, “I learnt a lot from the handball unit especially those teaching hints...I discovered a lot about teaching activities which were useful for my teaching in school.” Their pedagogical emphasis with their preferred mode of learning was on the practical aspect. For this group of participants, practical knowledge was not only practice but also the processes and procedures of teaching. Lai’s interview dialogue below illustrates such a conception:

Creative movements, handball, swimming and badminton are interesting because I like learning through training and practice. I don’t mean that they are just for “playing”. I’ve learnt lots of teaching steps and activities from these modules. They are really useful. (Lai)

This group of participants preferred sports performance, skills and practical knowledge to theoretical or discipline knowledge. Similarly, they perceived the theoretical modules as a lower priority. All of them could barely recall the content of theoretical modules that they had attended in detail. To’s articulation amplified their ordinary professional learning mode. He recalled in the interview, “My memory of the modules of PE Administration, PE Evaluation and Anatomy and Physiology was not very clear. We attended the courses and handed in the assignments. This is all I can remember.” Chung said that the theoretical courses were quite useless because he could not acquire knowledge and skills of teaching from any of them. Lai articulated a similar reaction:

I could not remember the details of the content concerning the module of “PE Administration”. During the module of “PE Evaluation”, I learnt how to calculate the marks and set the testing standard. Well, for “Anatomy and Physiology”, it repeated some of the PE content in the form 6 and 7. Besides, there were not many sessions. I admit that I couldn’t learn much from them.(Lai)

In their minds, knowledge that could not be used in their future teaching would never

become part of their professional knowledge.

### **Socialising agents**

They shifted their perceptions of the socialisation impacts from the supporting teachers to their tutors when compared with the first FE. The socialising impacts of their coaches diminished gradually.

In the previous socialisation phases, the coaches, sports training and competitions were the significant influences affecting the perception of this group of participants on their socialisation process. When engaging with their teacher education programme, they expected that their tutors should be highly skilled in sports as their coaches had been. However, after experiencing the difficulties in the first FE, they gradually shifted their confidence from “the imagery influence of their coaches” to “the real help of the supporting teachers and their tutors” in solving their teaching problems.

In variance with the first FE, they did not perceive much socialising impacts of the school PE teachers in their second FE. It may, to a certain extent, reveal the mode of practice of the second FE within which pre-service PE teachers are required to teach “independently” and school PE teachers are expected to offer help only when necessary. Nevertheless, such instruction is very often misinterpreted by the school PE teachers to mean that their mentorship role is unnecessary. In this case, all of them expressed that they were left to try out their teaching on their own. The dialogues extracted from the interview below illustrated their frustrations. To complained, “I did not experience any help offered by the PE teacher. He left me to sink or swim after introducing me to the pupils. No observation was done.” Although Lai’s PE teacher came to observe some of her classes occasionally, the presence of the PE teachers sometimes could be quite disturbing. Lai recalled:

She (the PE teacher) sat under the shade. It was noon and the sun was shining

brightly. So some of the pupils rushed to her and sat next to her. Then she did not ask them to come back again. I did not know what to do. It was embarrassing to ask the pupils to leave her and attend my lesson. (Lai)

On the contrary, their remarks about their tutors were generally positive which differed from that of the first FE. Lai particularly liked her tutor's supporting attitude. To's experience amplified their perception of their tutor's socialising impacts through constructive and specific suggestions:

The first visit was done at the beginning and the other one was in the middle of my FE. He pointed out my strengths and weaknesses of my performance in the lessons. His idea of managing the pupils impressed me most. He discussed with me how I could manage my pupils more effectively. I could still remember that I had to get the pupils to work as quickly as possible so that there was no time left for any misbehaviour. He suggested that I should establish the reward and punishment system and open more dialogues with the pupils. I should admit that most of them worked. He praised me for my improvement during the second visit. (To)

It cannot be certain whether such differences are related to the changes in the frequency of visits or the modes of the tutors' supervision. As a matter of fact, within such a separatist partnership (Furlong and Maynard, 1995) between the Institute and the FE school, the tutor's supporting and encouraging attitude, their call for the commitment to the care of the pupils, the mechanism for monitoring progress and the specific and constructive feedbacks for generating improvement were perceived favourably by this group of participants. To some extent, it illustrates socialising elements and impacts that they perceived positively in the field.

However, the influence of coaches on the socialisation process of this group of participants in this study phase was found to have diminished. In the second FE, none in the group expressed that they recalled or imitated explicitly the teaching ideas of their



coaches whom they recalled significantly in their first year study. It appears that the subsequent professional teacher preparation programmes, the second FE experience and their tutors exert considerable socialising impacts on them.

This group of participants were socialised towards more professional ways through the two-year teacher education programme. In the interview after the second FE, Chung declared in an assertive manner, “I have seen a great deal in the past two years. I am not worried about my competence. I am confident to teach PE.” To confirmed this view by saying, “I experienced a lot of these extreme cases concerning pupils’ misbehaviour. I had succeeded in teaching pupils triple jump and they began to like my way of teaching. I think I am capable of teaching PE.” Lai said confidently, “I am good at basketball and swimming, but ... I still need to make improvement. I am determined to teach well and I think I can do it.”

The process of occupational socialisation of the participants with an orientation towards coaching in the study can be a good example for PE teachers. They opened them up because of the dialectical impact of the first FE and regained their confidence in the professional re-orientation phase. Through the process of solving their teaching difficulties, they had a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. They knew how to make improvement for survival.

#### **7.4 Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity**

##### **Professional Conceptions**

The participants with teaching affinity maintained their conceptions of progressive teaching and a wide spectrum of competences for the job of PE teachers. Promoting pupils’ learning was maintained as their perception of the purpose of teaching PE.

This group of participants consolidated their progressive teaching conception

derived from their first FE. Promoting pupils' learning was regarded as the chief goal of PE teaching. They identified personal qualities such as their charisma, knowledge and sports skill proficiency, managerial, and organisational competences as important criteria for the job of a PE teacher in the previous socialisation phases.

Being self-initiated and proactive in their professional learning, it is common to see their acknowledgement of developing further through the experiences of their first FE, the subsequent teacher preparation programme and the sharing sessions with their peers. From the interview, Leung recalled with assertion that, "I got more experience this year. The teaching experience of last year benefited me most and I knew that I was capable of managing the pupils and promoting their learning...." Fai confirmed, "I was better equipped in knowledge and skills through attending the teacher education programme and sharing experience with my peers concerning PE teaching." Yan stated affirmatively, "I think I was more capable of detecting their interest and needs this year because of the experience that I gained from the last FE and the subsequent teaching modules...."

A number of studies (Locke, 1984; Kneer, 1986; Placek, 1983) found that pre-service as well as experienced PE teachers were not convinced that enhancing pupils' learning and performance is the primary purpose of PE. Interestingly, this group of participants in this study had aspirations and an idealistic mission towards teaching PE. Their desire to do something for the pupils was upheld strongly. Their commitment to teaching fitted well with the core values of the teacher education programme. During the interview, Yan illustrated their idealistic conception on PE teaching by saying that, "The important functions of a PE teacher can be detrimental if PE lessons are organised in the form of free activities." Leung had a similar conception, "I understand that teaching PE needs patience. If we want to help our pupils to make improvement, it takes time."

With positive socialisation experiences, they identified the criteria of skill proficiency (Fai, Lung, Leung, Yan, Siu, Sim), managerial competence for establishing

positive learning environment (Fai, Leung, Yan, Siu, Sim), social competence for maintaining relationships with the pupils, PE teachers and the tutors (Lung, Leung, Yan) and instructional skills (Fai) as important for their PE teaching. Leung's dialogue in the interview after the second FE, reflected a comprehensive view that this group of participants could meet the requirements of a PE teacher:

Skills in establishing relationship with pupils are necessary. We have to establish a proper image of a PE teacher, firm, friendly and positive. ...Through establishing class routine, a positive learning environment can be established. ...He should be able to scan the whole class all the time when giving instruction. He should be competent in physical activities and have a loud voice for giving clear instruction. (Leung)

### **Socialising strategies**

After reflecting on their practices, they began to adopt a variety of means to resolve their dissonance. They attended more to the pedagogical knowledge of their teacher education programme.

Although they experienced similar teaching problems, such as pupils' poor discipline, low motivation and inadequate facilities and equipment in their second FE as other course participants, they inclined towards adopting a humanistic approach (Templin, 1979) in solving them. They tended to accept and trust their pupils' own views of their teaching. They had an optimistic view of pupils' discipline. They were found to expand their socialising strategies in four ways for solving their teaching problems. In this respect, they were quite different from the participants of the other groups.

Firstly, their focus on improving teaching acts continued to be a means to solve their dissonance. They illustrated in the interview their aspiration to try out different approaches in their teaching, their desire to teach as many areas of physical activities as they could and their determination to try and complete all the teaching plans. They were

members of learning communities and interested in continuing their own professional development. In the interview, Yan commented on her own teaching, “This year, I was much happier and satisfied for I could teach as many areas as I liked. I could also complete all my teaching tasks planned. Most important of all, my pupils could learn from me... I found myself more competent in teaching...”. Siu said, “I could follow the teaching schedule and completed what I had planned to teach. The pupils seemed to enjoy the lessons. I did not experience such successful teaching in the first FE”. Fai commented:

This year, I tried to put in more elements in my teaching by including basketball, badminton and physical fitness. The FE was a good opportunity for me to experience teaching a variety of physical activities. ... I could implement all my planning and I could try new teaching approaches and activities. (Fai)

Secondly, they tended to demand and hold both themselves and their pupils accountable for teaching and learning. Leung recalled that “Pupils have to hold us accountable for their learning... The teacher should make the pupils understand his requirement both in and out of the classrooms.” Yan said, “Teachers should be demanding and capable of promoting pupils’ learning... Bringing them new physical activities is also important... Variety of means and strategies are vital for promoting active learning.”

Thirdly, they understood that sharing experience with others could enhance learning. They showed their eagerness to communicate with pupils and seek ideas for improving their teaching. In the interview, Leung stated, “Having discussions with the pupils on my teaching after school is important.” Lung recalled that:

This year, I had some pupils coming to my office and they shared with me their views on my teaching and talked about their problems. We chatted and told jokes. I took some of their comments and suggestions on my teaching and amended my teaching plans accordingly. (Lung)

Fourthly, they were found more capable of identifying a wider perspective of the

job requirement of a PE teacher. They extended their professional learning through involving themselves in the administrative and managerial functions of a PE teacher in their FE schools. They showed enthusiasm to be involved in extra work so as to better equip themselves for the full range of the job of PE teachers. Their involvement included familiarising themselves with the curriculum planning of the school (Fai, Leung), applying for funding for PE programmes (Fai), attending a meeting with local PE teachers (Fai), and coaching sports teams (Leung, Siu, Yan). Fai's interview dialogue below amplified the ambition of this group of participants who sought every socialisation opportunity in their professional learning:

This year, I paid particularly attention to the PE administration in the FE school such as how they planned their yearly extra-curricular activities, how they selected activities to suit the interests and ability of the pupils, what the new development of the PE curriculum was and how they applied for "the Quality Education Fund". I was glad to be invited by the PE teachers to participate in their extra-curricular activities and attend those sharing sessions with other PE teachers. I have a better understanding of the work of a PE teacher. (Fai)

Consequently, in their reflective journals written after the second FE, Fai related his positive socialisation experience with how he realized his problem of being too friendly to the pupils. However, the request of his pupils for having more handball lessons caused Lung to internalise such experience as "success" in his teaching. Yan and Leung solved the problem of pupils' low motivation successfully by making a contract with their pupils. Siu's satisfactory socialisation experience came from her self-analysis of teaching, identifying teaching problems and amending the teaching plans.

Concerning their professional learning from their teaching modules, they maintained their positive learning attitude and "knowing all" remained their expectation. They perceived their tutors as the facilitators and learning as a kind of commitment and necessity for being professionally competent in future teaching. They made their best

effort to learn professionally and facilitate their future professional performance regardless of the effectiveness of the implementation.

Similar to the articulation of the participants with an orientation towards coaching, they tended to favour the “applicative” knowledge in relation to their future teaching. Their change in curriculum expectation from “knowing all” to attend to “the applicative knowledge of the teaching modules” resulted from their experience of their first FE. Probably, they understood that the applicative knowledge in the teaching modules was needed for their teaching PE in schools. In the interview, all of them praised the practicality of the teaching units of badminton and handball. Specific comments such as “useful” and “practical” were commonly articulated. In their perceptions, their tutors incorporated an “applicative use” in these two units. Yan commented positively in relation to the teaching units by saying that “They (the tutors) could provide us with hints for teaching. A lot of activities and organisation for practice learnt in the module could provide us with insights into our teaching.” Leung thought that the teaching activities facilitated their teaching in secondary schools. In the interview, Siu expressed a similar view:

The module of badminton is useful. Time allotted to the module was ideal. However, there should be more time for practice. The quality of instruction concerning theoretical and practical aspects was of a high standard. For example, when we practised the drop ball, we acquired the knowledge of the teaching steps and skill analysis as well. (Siu)

In variance with the perceptions of the other groups of the participants, they demonstrated their capability to recall some detailed content of the theoretical modules. They were the only group of participants who had exhibited positive professional learning attitude regardless of the modules being “boring”, “irrelevant” and “uninteresting”. They tried their best to “associate”, “apply” and “interpret” the knowledge experienced in the

theoretical modules. Their “solidaristic” orientation to PE teaching may be the major contributing factor.

When asked about the most interesting learning activity in the module of “PE Administration in Secondary School”, Sim recalled that she had learnt how to organise a swimming gala. Siu remembered “how” and “what” to do when organising a sports function while Yan tried to know more about the systems of organisation and competition by attending the Inter-School Canoeing Competition. Leung recalled the details of activities in that module:

The most impressive thing was how we composed a report concerning the procedure of organising a football tournament. We wrote down a detailed explanation of a variety of competition system in the report. It urged us to consider every detail, which was drawn from our experience. I am more confident in organising a sports event. (Leung)

Concerning the module of “Basic Anatomy and Physiology”, Leung claimed that he had a better understanding of physical training. Lung admitted that the fifteen-hour module had enlightened him much in conditioning through exercises and the responses of the human body to physical exertion. Fai recalled:

When I revised the lecture notes during my spare time, I found the information useful because I really knew very little about that. Knowledge of blood, ATP-PC and lactic acid systems are practical when we formulate and train our pupils for improving sports performance. (Fai)

Lung commented, “Although I had never studied biology before, I was able to acquire the knowledge concerning the responses of the physical body in relation to exercise and training. Such knowledge is important to a PE teacher.”

Yan commented on the module of “Test and Measurement” by saying that “It is practical for it is about assessing and examining pupils’ performance. In the pre- and post

test arrangement, we can see the progress of pupils in a certain area of sports performance.”

On the whole, Lung and Siu made a similar point and said, “In the long run, the knowledge and skills learnt in the theoretical modules can be helpful and supportive in our future teaching.” Sim acknowledged that “It is useful and practical as it is closely related to the job of a PE teacher. It would have been more interesting if the module was taught with practical examples in schools.” Fai argued:

The theoretical modules are useful although it was sometimes quite boring. We, PE teachers, should be knowledgeable in this area. Very often, we only concentrate on the assessment and the credit point system of our teacher education course and neglect the importance of such information. (Fai)

### **Socialising agents**

The positive impacts from the socialising agents were maintained during the two FEs. The influence of their secondary school PE teachers gradually faded out:

When recalling the evidence in the previous socialisation phases, their secondary school PE teachers, positive learning experiences of their PE lessons, professional learning from the teacher education modules, their first FE, supporting PE teachers and their tutors were found to exert considerable socialising impacts on this group of participants. Accordingly, their positive conception on teaching was consolidated.

At the beginning of the interview, all of them except Lung maintained that they experienced the positive socialising impacts from their supporting PE teachers in their second FE schools. The measures that they perceived as useful included discussing with them problems concerning PE teaching and suggesting solutions (Yan, Leung, Siu), reserving facilities for their teaching (Fai, Yan), observing their lessons (Fai, Leung), helping them to handle misbehaving pupils, supplying information of individual pupils,



showing a supportive attitude (Yan, Leung) and offering first aid treatment for the pupils (Fai). They particularly favoured the help offered such as sharing of teaching experience, professional advice and constructive strategies for solving their teaching problems. These facilitated their socialisation process. The dialogue of Fai below illustrates how the PE teacher helped in promoting his professional learning in the field tactfully:

He (the PE teacher) observed my lessons during the first two weeks and provided me with practical advice and suggestions. As I became more competent, he left me to teach independently. Once he isolated some Form three pupils who were misbehaving during my lesson and brought them back after giving them counsel. (Fai)

They perceived similar positive socialising impacts from their tutors too. As illustrated in the dialogues from the interview after the second FE, they frequently highlighted the supporting attitude and specific feedbacks that they had received from their tutors during supervision. In their mind, two supervisory visits from their tutor were good enough for monitoring their progressive improvement in teaching and the constructive feedback was specific enough to generate actions. Leung recalled his tutor's supervision:

The tutor pointed out my weaknesses in teaching during his supervisory visits. He suggested that I should cut some of the activities when time was running short. He asked me to adopt simpler class organisation and select those activities that allowed more active participation. He raised the same issue as the backdrop for discussion during the second visit. His suggestions and recommendations on the instructional techniques were constructive and effective. (Leung)

Similar to the perception of the participants with an orientation towards coaching on the socialising impacts of the significance others, the tendency of associating with their secondary school teachers faded out gradually. They articulated such an influence as "rather vague" and "too remote". It is quite surprising as they recalled most of such successful PE experience as their critical incidents in the pre-training phase. The

experiences that they got from the teacher education programme and the FEs seemed to be more influential. It could be illustrated from the dialogues of Lung and Yan during the interview. Yan expressed, “I have confidence to teach PE in school because of the teacher education programme. However, I still want to learn more....” Lung commented, “I put into practice what I have learnt from the teacher education programme in my teaching during FE... The mode, the teaching content and the teaching activities of the lesson worked and the pupils liked it.”

These are course participants with the most idealistic conception of the subject and the PE profession. They are progressive in their thinking and tend to be non-dominant and liberal in their acting out of their professional work. The positive view on teaching and professional conception of promoting learning for the pupils was maintained in the second FE. Perceiving a wide spectrum of competences for teaching PE, they kept on trying out a variety of socialising strategies for resolving their dissonances. Their professional learning mode did not change much. They generally acknowledged the impacts of their socialising agents such as the PE teachers and tutors. At the end of their two-year teacher education programme, they all expressed that they were competent and confident to teach as the result of their pre-service socialisation process.

## **7.5 Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness**

### **Professional Conceptions**

This group of participants shifted their perception of the important elements for PE teaching from “skill proficiency and instructional task competence” to “the social competence”. Their goals of PE teaching were “bringing fun and motivating pupils to participate in their activities”.

In the previous socialisation phases, their relatively weak sports skill proficiency, unimpressive physical appearance and limited teaching experience in fulfilling the job of

PE teachers in schools were intensified. They shifted their intuitive belief of “being liked by the pupils” slightly to practical concerns of “the good skill proficiency and instructional competence” as important criteria for PE teachers after experiencing the realities of teaching.

The inadequacy of this group of participants to fulfil the job of a PE teacher was intensified during the first FE. Obviously, they had no other choice but to concentrate more on their PE teacher education programme in order to survive in their socialisation. At the beginning of the interview, all of them expressed that they had accumulated experience from their last FE and the subsequent teacher education modules. They then felt better equipped for their second FE. It is not surprising to see their common claims as “I was more mature this year” (Kuen), “I had more experience this time and I knew how to plan suitable and interesting activities for them” (Chan) and “I was more experienced for I had gone through the first FE. Besides, I have learnt more from my second year study” (Man). Their remarks, to a certain extent, illustrate their socialisation efforts in relation to the PE teacher education programme.

In the second FE, coincidentally, it had been arranged for all of them to teach in the “band one” schools where pupils’ academic background and discipline were better compared with pupils in the lower bands. Their satisfaction with the placements can be seen from their remarks in the interview. Chan commented with much relief, “The pupils were more obedient. They were more willing to work...” Man was satisfied and described his feeling as “quite happy” and said, “I had no problems in pupils’ discipline. I think that the teacher has been teaching very well there.”

Although they experienced relatively little managerial problems of the pupils when compared with that of the previous year, they immediately encountered other problems in motivating the pupils to participate and learn. In the second FE, they recalled their notable incidents in the form of teaching episodes illustrating the low motivation and

passive participation of their pupils in their activities. It is likely that they were unable to motivate their pupils because of the boring teaching content, uninspiring instructional skills and unimpressive physical appearance. In the reports of their critical incidents in the reflective journals, all of them recalled the episodes concerning how their pupils responded passively to their teaching. Chan recorded:

The pupils had low incentive to learn. They thought that the lesson was boring. They told me that they had learnt the skills before. Some of the pupils even did not change their uniform and refused to attend the PE lessons...(Chan)

Man recalled:

The pupils seemed to enjoy the first few lessons. Then they became bored in the last two. The situations in the Form three classes were even worse. They stopped working and sat on the mats when I walked to the other side of the gymnasium to give individual supervision...(Man)

Kuen wrote:

They purposefully took a long time to get changed. They lined and grouped themselves up sluggishly. They pretended to practise actively in front of me, but stopped doing anything when I was not watching them...(Kuen)

Accordingly, motivating pupils to participate in their PE lessons became their major concern. They started by establishing better relationships with them. Comments about friendliness (Chan), sharing and caring (Man), and maintaining dialogues with the pupils (Kuen) were common. Chan commented, "A PE teacher should be friendly and have a good relationship with his pupils."

Besides this, they tried to bring "fun" to their pupils. In their mind, bringing fun to their pupils was not only an indicator of success for most PE teachers as illustrated in a number of studies (Placek, 1983; O'Reilly et al 2001), but also an important element to impel pupils to participate actively. "Fun" was regarded as an outcome of their activities

and a means to survive in their FE. Apart from showing caring and concern, fun had to be maintained even though sacrificing learning for their pupils. Man's dialogue during the interview illustrates their point of view:

This year, I realized that it was more important to let our pupils learn with fun... Of course, it is ideal to learn as well as to enjoy during PE lessons. But, if pupils don't want to learn, why should we force them? ... A PE teacher should be all-rounded. He should show his concern to his pupils and communicate with them... When I looked back on the FE, I understood that those pupils who did not practise willingly in the gymnastics lesson were not really naughty. They were just not interested in the event. They only felt bored after only a few lessons. So, I wonder if it is really useful or worthwhile to force our pupils to learn something they don't like. We need to think about it again. (Man)

Regardless of PE teacher educators' effort for convincing pre-service PE teachers that PE is a school subject devoted to learning, Placek (1983) found that her pre-service PE teachers inclined to provide a kind of sports and games experience for keeping pupils "busy", making them "happy" and keeping them "good" in terms of class discipline. Similar to Placek's pre-service PE teachers, this group of participant perceived similar PE experience that they thought were suitable for their pupils. However, as noted by O'Reilly et al (2001), having fun could not completely take the place of challenge and the intrinsic satisfaction of pupils' personal experiences of physical competency. It appeared to be beyond the capability of this group of participants to motivate their pupils' interests in learning during the second FE.

### **Socialising strategies**

They shifted their strategies from "projecting their image" to "adopting social strategies and complying with the pupils' suggestions". They began to question the structure and the mode of professional knowledge of the teacher education programme instead of attending to the "knowing that" of the curriculum.

In the previous socialisation phases, this group of participants tended to accept their immediate experience gained from the modules and attended more to the “knowing that” element of the curriculum. Practical knowledge in the forms of the mastery of module contents and physical skills were their major focuses. They adopted a variety of impression management techniques to improve their image and identity as being PE teachers.

The notable incidents recalled illustrate their inability to motivate their pupils. In resolving their problems, they intentionally relied on their social strategies through showing friendliness, sharing and caring attitude to the pupils. They also thought that they could survive if they maintained dialogue with them. They even tried to make compromises with the pupils. They believed that these were the effective ways of motivating their pupils to work. Chan recorded in his writing after the FE, “I discussed the matter with my pupils and told them my expectation.” Man wrote, “I tried my best to maintain a good relationship through talking with them frequently. I also stayed behind after school and played ball games with them.” Kuen stated, “I talked to them after the lesson. I sought their opinion on my teaching after school. I amended my teaching content and skipped some difficult ones such as back spring and cartwheel in response to their comments...” Eventually, they were relieved and satisfied when their problems were solved partially.

Concerning their attitude towards the mode of professional learning, they shifted from attending to the practical content of the teaching modules to complaining about the structure of the teacher education programme in their second year of study. Their complaint largely related to the duration of the units. The relatively short units created difficulties for them to master the subject content in the form of the skills and the pedagogical elements.

Perhaps, with practical experience of PE teaching encountered during their first FE, they understood more about the realities of teaching and their expectation of the

teacher education programme. No wonder, their expansion of attention was shifted from the “knowing that” of the teacher education programme to questioning the effectiveness of the programme.

It appears that the mismatch of the conceptions between the participants of this group and the tutors is significant. The tutors expected that the participants should be proficient in skills before attending the modules. However, participants thought that the modules should equip them with both the content and pedagogical knowledge. Their anxiety and inability to grasp the whole of the module content intensified when the time allocated to each of the professional activity modules was found to be relatively short. For Kuen, it was difficult for him to master the pedagogical knowledge before the content knowledge was acquired. He complained in the interview:

Some of the modules like handball, creative movements and swimming were not practical at all. Their main objective was to show us how to teach. However, if we do not have a strong foundation of these physical activities, we can hardly master the teaching skills. (Kuen)

In this study phase, all of them challenged the irrelevance of the theoretical knowledge in fulfilling the work of a PE teacher. Chan grumbled during the interview:

...Sometimes, or very often, we were confused. Are they (theoretical modules) really useful? There should be some concrete ideas and examples. Then it would be much better... Well, I can't say that they are not useful. But, I don't know when we can make use of them. (Chan)

Kuen gave a similar opinion, “I doubt the relevance of the theoretical modules to my teaching. How can they be related to our future work?” Man also queried, “It was a waste of time to study so many theoretical modules. We should spend more time on practising teaching.”

Their prevalent way of professional learning stuck closely with the experiential

type. Such learning aptitude dictated their receptivity on the kind of professional knowledge learnt. Man illustrated such a conception by saying that:

I think we learn more in doing than reading theories in books. For example, if we want to know the procedures of booking a court for practice, we just simply go to the stadium and make the booking instead of reading the instruction in the handouts. (Man)

**Socialising agents:**

The nurturing environment should include the socialising role of the supporting teachers and tutors.

Presumably, this group of participants was affected by the limited primary school PE experience as illustrated in the pre-training phase. Their inability to tackle their teaching problems, their unimpressive physical appearance and low skill proficiency served as a change agent on their learning-to-teach process in their first FE. The supporting PE teachers in their first FE schools also exerted considerable socialising impact on them.

All participants in this group continued to mention that the supporting PE teachers in their FE schools offered a great help to them in their socialisation process in the second FE. It appears that all their supporting PE teachers who were serious and positive, acted as role models for their professional learning in the field. It should be noted that those undertaking PE teaching were teaching in band one schools. In their eyes, the supporting PE teachers acted strategically in supervising, mentoring and monitoring their performance closely. Obviously, immediate and regular support given to someone who was lacking confidence was particularly necessary and important. Chan commented with gratitude, “The PE teacher was very helpful. He came to my lesson every time.” Man stated, “He came to observe my lesson at least once every week.” Kuen expressed gratefully, “He came to observe my lesson frequently.... I should say I owed him a lot.”



Other forms of help and assistance appreciated by them were the offering of advice and suggestions for improving their teaching and management of class (Chan, Man, Kuen), helping to manage the class directly (Chan, Kuen), demonstration lessons for modelling (Man) and more important, tactfully executing direct assistance during their lesson (Chan). Below is the dialogue of Chan illustrating the tact of his supporting PE teacher's supervision:

The PE teacher was very helpful....He gave me lots of advice... He told me a lot about the class management. He taught me how to teach volleyball in better progressive steps. When he tackled any discipline problems in class, he did not deal with it directly. He just walked up to the pupil and stood next to him. Then I knew what I should do. Sometimes, I was so dumb that I could not spot the problem in class myself. I was quite weak in it. (Chan)

They perceived their tutors' socialising impacts as "constructive", "helpful" and "useful" when compared with that of the first FE. The professional learning support that they received included pinpointing their weaknesses for improvement (Chan), offering concrete examples for follow-up action (Chan, Man), discussing and advising their plans for teaching and methods of managing the pupils (Man), and suggesting a lot of good points concerning their teaching (Kuen, Man). In the interview, Kuen expressed his appreciation of his tutor:

He (the tutor) discussed with me my strong and weak points concerning my performance in the lesson with me. He was really kind and mentioned a lot of good points concerning my teaching. I still remembered that he praised me for my enthusiasm, effective organisation of the pupils, well-organised activities and speedy grouping of the pupils. However, I needed to make improvement on my skill proficiency, the clarity of instruction and the selection of interesting and challenging activities in order to motivate pupils to learn. He was quite right and I will keep on improving myself. More important, I began to believe that I could be a PE teacher since then. (Kuen)

The socialisation experience at the second year study including the FE offered an important opportunity for the participants of this group to gain their image and identity as PE teachers. No matter what areas of inadequacy that they still manifested, they displayed confidence and determination to take up the job of a PE teacher in school. Kuen reflected enthusiastically and said, “I would try my best to fulfil the job of a PE teacher.” Man said confidently, “I know what I am doing and what I should do in a lesson.” Chan said proudly, “If you ask me to teach PE now, I will accept it willingly because I am able to.”

The critical change of the participants of this group of course members was towards more positive perception of themselves during the socialisation process and this illustrates the importance of the nurturing environment. Their positive socialisation in the field setting conveys a strong programmatic message for the PE teacher education programme. The band one schools with positive learning atmosphere and little discipline problems, the full support from the PE teachers and the encouraging tutors can make a great deal of difference especially for the pre-service PE teachers who possess low image to enter the profession.

## **7.6 Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations**

### **Professional Conceptions**

This group of participants possessed a pessimistic view on PE teaching. Their perception of managerial task competence was maintained as the requirement for PE teachers. For them, PE teaching meant discipline and control.

In the previous socialising phases, they were found to possess pragmatic and custodial control orientations for tackling their socialisation experience. They believed that the mastery of the managerial competence was important for PE teaching.

In the second FE, it had been arranged for all of them to have their second FE in the band five schools except Hung who had her teaching practice in a band one school. It was

not surprising to see their dissatisfaction about their placements at the beginning of the interview. Based on the observation during the pre-FE visit to the school, Tung complained, “Everything in the school seemed to be in chaos.” Kwan declared solemnly, “The girls just did not want to move at all.” Hang’s grievance amplifies the complaints of this group of participants below:

There was not even a mat in the school and thus I couldn’t teach gymnastics ...The pupils there were naughty. Some of them even enjoyed isolating some other pupils... How the teacher could let the pupils play whatever they liked in class. They could attend the PE lessons without their T-shirts. One of the PE teachers usually left the class after distributing basketballs, football and badminton rackets. Only one teacher taught his pupils in the first lesson and let them play freely in the second one.

Their complaints, to a certain extent, reveal the difficulties in finding suitable schools for the FE placement. Their articulations of PE lessons being conducted in the form of organised recess also reflect some common PE practices in schools in Hong Kong. However, their inclination to find excuses for not being able to perform well might be a contributing factor to their problematic experience. Deep in their mind, having a better career option was their underlying reason for joining the profession while bearing the responsibility for pupils’ learning and promoting desirable behaviour might not be their major concerns.

Similar to the first FE, they encountered the problem of inadequacy of sports facilities (Hang, Kwan), pupils’ misbehaviour (Hang, Tung), low motivation (Hang, Tung, Hung, Kwan) and poor skills in PE (Hung, Kwan). They found it more frustrating when they perceived no respect from their pupils (Hang, Tung) or the school teachers (Hang, Tung).

With classes being used to having free activities in their PE lessons, they found extremely difficulty in conducting their lessons as recommended in the teacher education programme. Obviously, they related back to their past teaching experience on how they

had successfully managed the pupils through direct punitive approach in their first FE. They expected that managerial task competence remained as their most important work for PE teachers. In the interview, Tung commented by saying that, “It was very difficult to manage the pupils with serious discipline problems. Controlling and managing the pupils is important for the PE teachers and pupils need to be trained in discipline before they can learn anything.” Kwan perceived that discipline of the pupils should come first. He said in an absolute manner:

‘Management comes before teaching’- our Chinese proverb in teaching is always true. Aiming at good discipline is very important for a PE teacher. Ideally, pupils should have fun and enjoy themselves in a PE lesson so a good PE teacher should know how to let pupils learn with fun. It is not an easy task at all. Besides, there are usually unexpected things happening in a PE lesson. Pupils need discipline training. My belief on this matter becomes stronger and stronger after each FE. (Kwan)

Discipline was not only perceived by them as the means for controlling the pupils but also an end in itself. They believed that a proper PE lesson could not be run without disciplinary training. More important, they feared losing control of their class might result in their own vulnerability and jeopardise their success in the second FE and the completion of their teacher education programme. All of them tended to be more rigid, conservative, disciplinarian and strict when compared with the other groups of participants. They assumed that pupils’ misbehaviours were inevitable and there was nothing they could do to prevent such instances from happening. However, they seldom mentioned any specific strategies to prevent and act upon pupils’ misbehaviour.

### **Socialising strategies**

Complaining about the irrelevance of the teacher education programme, putting the blame on others, establishing authority in controlling the pupils, improving their ways of teaching and focusing their professional learning with pragmatic intention were adopted

as socialising strategies by this group of participants.

This group of participants expected that their training should be directed towards solving their problems in the sports field. They adopted “psyching out” as their socialising strategy by acting in accordance with the requirements of the teacher education programme and their tutors’ expectation. They built up their authority in controlling the pupils in the previous socialising phases.

With more serious teaching problems encountered in their second FE, they were found to be more mature in adopting a variety of strategies to solve their problems. Perhaps, they were better prepared through enrichment from their teacher education programme and the experience of the first FE.

Firstly, establishing authority and control over the pupils continued to be their first priority. They adopted the strategies used in the first FE that had successfully tackled the managerial problems of the pupils. Moreover, their concerns about the evaluation by their tutors did not change much. As a result, they tried to keep their teaching situation under control through establishing their authority and controlling the pupils as they did at the very early stage of their FE. In the reflective journal, Tung wrote, “I tried to pay more attention to those pupils with discipline problems. I punished them immediately by making them to do push-ups whenever I found any misbehaviour.” Similarly, Hang recorded:

At the beginning of the first lesson, they just went into the PE storeroom and got a football or a basketball. Then they were ready to play on their own. I stopped them at once. I tried to execute my power to start my teaching... It was not easy at all. (Hang)

Secondly, since they were participants with an orientation towards pragmatic consideration, getting through their FE was always their major concern. Placek (1983), Schempp (1986) and Fernandez-Balboa (1991) reported in their studies that pre-service

PE teachers very often conceived that there was nothing they could do to prevent misbehaviour in their PE lessons. This group of participants in the present study revealed in the interview that they conceived themselves to be “passers by”. Hang explained, “I was so helpless... However, we understood that we were student teachers only. Naturally, they wouldn’t listen to us.” Tung bore a similar grievance saying that, “The pupils have already been in the school for two years. We, as student teachers, were there for just a few weeks. Why should they listen to a ‘passer-by’?”

Thirdly, there was a tendency of them to put all the faults on others as their defensive strategy. They tended to blame their pupils but not themselves for shortcomings. Their blame reflected their desire to avoid taking responsibility as suggested by Shaver (1985). They seldom mentioned their inadequacy and ineffectiveness. In the interview, Hang amplified his “scapegoat” conception by saying that, “The teachers there...I don’t mean to say bad things about them, but I found that they worked half-heartedly. I had to make great effort in order to teach properly.” Similar complaints were filed by Tung as follows:

...I saw them (PE teachers) conducting their PE lessons loosely and pupils could do whatever they liked in their lessons. That explained why I could not perform as well as the others. I encountered more difficulties and conflicts when I had to conduct the lessons in the traditional way. (Tung)

On the other hand, Hung put the fault on the inadequacy of equipment below:

I was really surprised when there was an injury in class because the stunt was so simple. Perhaps the old and broken bench was a possible cause. What else could I do? They were all that I could get from the school for teaching balancing activities. (Hung)

Fourthly, they probably knew clearly that it would be difficult to control the situation without improving their teaching. It was surprising to see their shifting of focus towards

improving their teaching as a means to solve their problems in the sports fields. Hang recorded in his writing of the reflective journals, "I bought some ropes myself to facilitate my teaching." Tung wrote, "I fastened the pace of the lessons and added in more difficult skills. I pushed myself harder...." Kwan made his reflection:

I cross-checked my decision with some of the successful incidents and some failures when choosing the teaching materials and procedures. I tried to design some interesting warm up exercises and make the tasks easier but more challenging so as to let them have a sense of achievement...(Kwan) .

Their socialisation strategies worked to some extent. Hang thought that he had solved some of his problems but he was still uncertain about the effectiveness of his teaching. Tung was rather confused with the effectiveness of his strategies in solving his pupils' discipline problems. Hung doubted her ability to select interesting activities for her pupils while Kwan was still troubled by the inactivity of his girls.

Concerning their professional learning, all of them acknowledged experiencing learning in their professional activity units which were helpful to their future teaching. However, they were dissatisfied with all these units for their inadequacy of time allocated and the limited depth and breadth of the content covered. Tung complained at the beginning of the interview after the second FE, "The time allotted to the skill courses is not enough. I don't think we can acquire adequate knowledge of swimming, creative dance and badminton within 12 to 15 hours each. It is really ridiculous."

Similar to the perceptions of the group of participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness, conflicting conceptions of how the practical modules should be implemented existed between this group of participants and the tutors. What the participants expected from the practical module was both the content and pedagogical content knowledge so they could directly make use of what they had learnt to teach in schools. However, their tutors seemed to be adopting the applicative mode of the

knowledge use in implementing the professional knowledge. Without adequate background and relevant skill proficiency, they felt it was difficult to master enough professional knowledge to teach the activities in school. Hang's interviewing dialogue below amplifies their complaint on the implementation of the practical modules:

The courses for handball and creative dance etc. were useful but too short. We need more practice before our FE. What we learnt was at superficial level only ...It might be wrong to assume that all of us would possess all the required fundamental skills and knowledge when attending these modules. But, what we need most is the content of how to teach. (Hang)

Apart from inadequate time allotted for each professional activity unit, they also criticised these courses as being geared to work with high skilled participants and proved to be of little value for ordinary ones. Kwan's complaint during the interview below echoed the frustration of most of the participants in this group on the practical modules because of such conflict:

Handball, badminton and swimming are big topics. How could we acquire what we need just in 10 hours? It is really unbelievable. Besides, all skills taught were at an intermediate level. It is unfavourable for beginners like some of us. (Kwan)

All of them exhibited similar dissatisfaction with their professional learning from the theoretical modules, which was largely related to their lack of background knowledge and their disagreement with the way the modules were implemented. From the very beginning of the interview, Hang was critical, "Well, I think that the theoretical modules are not practical. Some of them are useless and irrelevant. They are just some theories." Kwan expressed that they were troubled and confused by the terminology. Hung said, "Knowing the names of the bones and organs can't help our teaching much." She also related her dissatisfaction with their weak background knowledge:

Since we did not have background knowledge, it was very difficult for us to gain



considerable knowledge of the content of the module. Most of us would try to memorise all the theories and forget them after the completion of the module. (Hung)

It was hardly surprising that relatively little content of each theoretical module could be recalled by the participants of this group, which was similar to the findings of the previous socialisation phase (professional orientation phase). The reasons for their prevalence of ignoring professional enrichment from the theoretical knowledge in their professional learning were obvious. Practical over theoretical knowledge continued to be the preferred learning mode, in part, because of their pragmatic orientation.

### **Socialising agents**

They continued to distrust the supporting PE teachers but made different comments about their tutors.

In the previous socialisation phases, they preferred their tutors to be “master craft persons”, from whom they could obtain all necessary professional knowledge to solve their problems in the sports field. Socialising impacts from their tutors and supporting teachers in their FE were minimal. The first FE experience appeared to offer relatively little socialising impact on their pragmatic aptitude.

All of them maintained their adverse comments on their school PE teachers in the second FE. As revealed in the interview after the FE, they were frustrated by the PE teachers’ irresponsible way of conducting the lessons and managing the pupils. Tung commented:

Frankly speaking, talking to him (the PE teacher) was a waste of time and energy because he was the person of the laissez-faire type. Pupils could do whatever they liked in his lessons. I did not know whether he dared not manage the pupils or he intentionally neglected them because they were so rebellious and were not worth to be care for...(Tung)

They were critical of the fact that the PE teachers seldom supervised their lessons and rarely offered them advice on their teaching in facilitating their professional learning. The PE teachers perceived that having the participants practising teaching in schools only served the purpose of releasing their workload. In the interview, Tung grumbled, “The PE teacher disappeared after introducing me to the pupils at the first lesson. I could never find him for consultation.” Hang also protested, “He came to my lesson once only. If he did not have to write a report, he would not have come. He did not give me any advice, not even a single word.” Conflicting conceptions between Hung and the PE teachers concerning the purpose of FE remained unsolved:

The PE teacher offered me little help. She was an old and experienced PE teacher but she adopted a laissez-faire attitude to me. She said “OK” all the time whenever I wanted to seek help from her. No advice on my teaching was offered. It appeared that as far as I took some of her teaching load and no trouble was encountered, it would be OK... (Hung)

Without much support from the PE teachers, they experienced greater vulnerability in controlling the situation, which eventually was detrimental to their grading. Consequently, they began to rely more on the tutors’ professional support. They understood pretty well that their tutors were the persons who could determine their destiny as regards their continuation of the teacher education programme. No wonder their perceptions on the tutors’ help shifted towards the positive side. They sincerely appreciated the tutors’ encouraging and understanding attitudes to their professional learning. In the interview after the FE, Kwan commended, “Mr X (the tutor) was very helpful and gave me lots of valuable advice.” Hang recalled how his “understanding” tutor supervised him and took off some of the pressure of being assessed. He stated, “He (the tutor) understood my situation. He said that he knew the usual practice in that school. He knew the teachers there too. He advised me to read more books about badminton and try to acquire considerable skills for I was weak in it. He gave me suggestions on how

to organise the class.”

Deep in their mind, minimising the opportunity of being failed in the FE was still their focus. Tung confessed,

Ms X supervised me this year. I was very glad that she was my tutor. Everyone knew that she was not that kind of “killer”. She would fail nobody in the FE and everyone liked to be supervised by her.... Although I was not performing as well as she expected, I got a pass. She reminded me of a lot of things...(Tung)

Concerning the impact of the pre-training phase, all of them claimed that they did not experience any significant socialising influence from their primary and secondary school PE experience including their PE teachers. The impact of their PE teacher education programme seems significant for socialising them with the skills and knowledge about PE teaching. Kwan had the same sort of experience and said, “I think I learnt most in the institute. The hints for teaching are more useful.”

The interviewing dialogues of “I suffered a lot in the past two months” from Kwan; “the FE troubled me most” from Tung; “You can’t believe how rebellious our pupils are nowadays” from Hang and “what a big relief in my life” from Hung at the end of her FE illustrate the socialisation process of this group of participants in the field setting had been a difficult one. They pessimistically viewed PE teaching as management, control and maintenance of discipline. Accordingly, managerial competence was perceived as the requirement for PE teachers. Complaining about the irrelevance of the teacher education programme, blaming others for all possible faults, conforming to the tutors and distrusting the PE teachers confirmed their relatively custodial attitude.

However, with all the setbacks, they did not lose heart and still thought that they were competent to teach. Kwan commented proudly, “If I am asked to teach in a school now, I surely have the guts to take it.” Hung said, “I have experienced so many problems and I overcame them one by one. I won’t worry about my competence to teach.” Tung

said frankly, “I am always ready to teach PE in the future because it is my career. Be realistic!”

### **7.7 Participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style**

#### **Professional conception**

This group of participants maintained their pessimistic view on teaching and perceived the function of catharsis as the purpose of PE.

As illustrated in the previous socialisation phases, they were adaptive participants who perceived social task as important criteria for PE teaching. With the relatively “smooth and successful” experience of the first school experience, all of them except Kin joined the second FE with seeming confidence. It seems that their successful experience in handling pupils’ problems in their first FE and their enrichment through the subsequent teacher education programme helped a great deal. Without much deliberation, Shing recalled in the interview after the second FE, “I never worry about the discipline problems of the pupils. The only thing I was scared of was they did not want to attend my lessons”. Kai agreed by saying that, “I originally did not worry much about my second FE for I had the experience of dealing with these naughty pupils before. Moreover, it was only eight weeks. As far as I could demonstrate my performance of teaching satisfactorily, I was OK. They were only two assessed supervisory visits.”

However, when faced with their second FE, they experienced more serious pupil problems including misbehaviour such as fighting (Kai, Ho and Kin), speaking foul languages (Kai, Kin, Shing), being too active (Kai, Kin, Ho), low motivation of the pupils especially the girls (Ho, Shing) and paying no attention to them (Ho, Kin). Other difficulties included renovation work that hindered the availability of facilities for PE lessons (Shing) and conflicting advice offered by different PE teachers (Ho). Even worse,

their frustrations were intensified without the “legitimate” help from the supporting PE teachers in their second FE. In the interview, Kin grumbled, “I wish I could lodge an appeal.” Ho also protested:

Nobody paid attention to me. I felt as if I was not a teacher at all. I had little influence on pupils... I had to beg for co-operation. There were only nine girls in the class. They did not move at all... It was really a headache... I learnt a lot from the teachers in managing the pupils last year. This time, the teacher only told me that I should not wear a smile from the very beginning... Sometimes, I wondered if there were any other better schools that I could have for my FE. (Ho)

As recalled from their socialisation experience in the first FE, they were easily influenced by the prevailing PE practice in schools. It is not surprising to see that they supported the mode of PE lessons being conducted as “organised recess” at the second FE. PE was treated as a school subject offering recreational activities and serving the “let off steam” purpose for the pupils. During PE lessons, pupils could be released from the pressure of their “academic” subjects and PE served the function of catharsis. Ho’s dialogue expressed exactly what this group of participants wanted their PE to be, “It was only a dream to let pupils learn with fun. However, it was desirable to have a relaxed style of teaching.” Shing said, “It is more important to provide pupils with enjoyable activities. They should be released from their stressful life through participating in interesting physical activities in PE lessons.” The dialogue of Kai below reiterates the “let off steam” purpose of PE for the pupils:

Sometimes, it is meaningless to concentrate on teaching this and learning that. As far as they enjoy themselves in lesson, the ‘let off steam’ effect can be promoted. Today, pupils get too much pressure from their academic subjects. Why not let them enjoy playing whatever games they like. (Kai)

Their articulation of the cathartic function of PE coincided with a number of studies

with pre-service and even experienced PE teachers' orientation (Placek, 1983; Lawson, 1993). Keeping pupils busy, happy and good had very often been identified as successful indicators and work-related epistemologies for PE practitioners.

Their professional conception of the requirements for PE teaching was broadened when they realised that the good skill proficiency and a positive learning atmosphere were important factors to impress upon their pupils. Shing was frustrated at not being able to achieve in this aspect. He said in a desperate voice, "A PE teacher should be all-rounded in skill proficiency... No matter how hard I tried, the pupils still did not appreciate my effort but thought that I was not good in skill proficiency." On the other hand, Ho experienced the sensation of being a hero because of his outstanding football skills. He recalled proudly, "The pupils were usually amazed when I demonstrated my football skills. They responded well when I taught them how to play football after school. The atmosphere was much better in form 2X because I taught them football."

### **Socialising Strategies**

They expanded their socialising strategies from conforming to tutors and reconciling with the pupils to adopting a variety ways of tackling their teaching problems. Practical experience and knowledge continued to be their preferred professional learning mode.

This group of participants depended much on the bits and pieces of theoretical and practical knowledge from all modules of the teacher education programme as their preferred learning mode. They survived in their first FE through complying and reconciling with the pupils. They conformed to the tutors' requirement strategically as illustrated in the previous socialisation phases.

Although troubled and frustrated by the pupils' discipline problems, this group of participants were generally sympathetic to the pupils' misbehaviour. They probably

associated their incidents of being punished unfairly by their PE teachers in secondary schools with their pupils' discipline problems. Their inclination to project a pessimistic conception of their pupils, who would have poor discipline anyway, was also prevalent and in many respects similar to the study conducted by Wood and Earls (1995). When examining the belief of new PE graduates, this group of participants expressed exactly the concern over "pushing" pupils too much. They might not be aware of the seriousness of the problems. In the interview, Ho reflected, "I still think that I am a student. I do not want to punish them. I am too kind and always feel pity for them." Kin said, "Why shouldn't we be nice to our pupils as far as they behave well in class?"

They were adaptive student teachers with good social skills. Moreover, they possessed a relative sympathetic aptitude to the pupils. It is not surprising to see their adoption of a variety of strategies to please and comply with the pupils. In the interview, Shing recalled, "If they behaved well, they would have more time for playing." Kai claimed, "I praised them when they were obedient." Ho said, "We tried to settle the problem by compromise. I told them that I would let them play freely at the last few minutes if they worked at what I taught." Their desire to please pupils was another aspect of their relationship with the pupils.

They tactfully made use of and even bribed those "hidden leaders" to help in managing the classes. Ho reflected in his reflective journal, "There were some "Big brothers" <hidden leaders> in class. I sometimes asked them to help me to look after the class...I asked for their co-operation and tried to be friendly. I even bought them drinks when they were not so disruptive." Shing wrote, "I intentionally required the trouble makers to keep the discipline in class. Whenever they detected any misbehaviour, they would be rewarded by being allowed to have their lunch earlier."

They intentionally ignored and pretended that they had seen nothing concerning pupils' misbehaviours. Ho recorded, "When they (the pupils) used foul language, I pretended not to hear it." Shing wrote, "I did not care much about those girls who

sometimes sat aside and chatted with each other.” Similar to Fernandez-Balboa’s (1991) study on the belief, interactive thoughts and action of student PE teachers regarding pupil misbehaviour, this group of participants did not see themselves as part of the teaching context and attributed the responsibility for misbehaviour to the external factors such as the teachers, pupils and their FE schools.

The varieties of strategies used by them in tackling their teaching problems illustrate their adaptive dispositions. However, without a sense of their own agency, action and ability to construct knowledge in their teaching, they appeared to react to situations rather than initiate preventive action for their teaching. No wonder, they encountered many of problems and had to learn from experience. Kai and Shing recalled most of their up and down feelings when encountering the second FE in the reflective journals. Kai wrote, “Teaching PE is not an easy task.” Shing recorded, “At last, I was through. But it is really difficult to teach PE.”

They appeared to favour the applicative mode of the knowledge. Professional knowledge, in their mind, meant those could be made use of in their future teaching. In the interview, Ho explained, “I think they are (practical units) better because we can really make use of them when having our FE.” Shing recalled, “The basic modules concerning how to organise a PE lesson and how to group the pupils for activities are quite useful.” He continued to acknowledge the practical experience gained in the modules:

During the badminton session, we learnt how to distribute three to five shuttle cocks to each pupil and to assign more pupils to collect them back after each practice. We experienced how to allocate more time for practising the skills and less time for the game in the module of football. They are useful tips for our teaching.

From the interview dialogue of Shing, Kin and Kai, their dissatisfaction related to



the inadequate time and the impracticality of the teaching content is readily evident. In the interview, Kin complained, "Time allotted for those practical modules was inadequate. Most of them were presented at the basic level. The modules should show us how to teach." Ho grumbled, "The content might be perceived as quite OK for the beginners but too simple for some of us who were already good at those sports. Thus the wide range of abilities in our class might affect the teaching progression." Kai also voiced:

Some of the teaching methods may not be practical in schools because the availability of facilities is the decisive factor in our teaching. For example, when we teach football, it is difficult for us to teach over forty pupils in a basketball court. During a game situation, how to settle the pupils who are waiting for their turns is always a problem. (Kai)

For those theoretical modules, Ho amplified their preferred mode of learning and said, "I think I have to seize help from the teachers in school when I try to apply what I've learnt in the theoretical modules. I believe in learning from doing...It is very difficult to make use of the knowledge learnt in the modules of PE Administration and Test and Measurement in PE." Kai was sure that practical experience was more important and valuable than theories. Ho simply commented that he did not use them in teaching.

For them, the theory-practice dilemma was also significant when acquiring their theoretical knowledge. Ho experienced confusing perceptions on the module of PE administration:

I knew that there was something in the module. ...First I could understand a little during the lectures. Then I began to have a clearer idea when I did the assignment. Ironically, it became very confusing when we had to put the theories into practice. I do not find them useful at all. I think practical experience is more important. (Ho)

### **Socialising agents**

Socialising impacts from the PE teachers was minimal while professional support from the tutors was highly commended.

In variance with their favourable comments on the supporting teachers in their first FE, they perceived that they had received little professional support from them this time. They were not satisfied with their irresponsible attitude. They thought that the supporting PE teachers offered no assistance to their professional learning. They did not show any faith in their teaching and simply reminded them to take a tougher line in managing their pupils' misbehaviour, which they disagreed with most.

They apparently compared the help that they had received from the supporting PE teachers between the two FEs. Shing's interview dialogue below illustrates exactly their feelings of distress:

The PE teacher of the FE school of the last year was more enthusiastic and actively offered his help. His enthusiasm and initiative made me feel a bit guilty if I sought help from him because it would increase his workload and cause him extra trouble. This year, the PE teacher was irresponsible and nothing was offered....(Shing).

In fact, they were not aware of the different role of the supporting PE teachers this year. The PE teachers in schools were told by the Institute to offer help only when necessary. They did not have to perceive their role as mentor and were encouraged to let the participants go for their teaching. It was not surprising to see the participants' dissatisfaction. Shing and Ho complained that the PE teachers just introduced them to the class at the first lesson and left them to do everything on their own. Kai illustrated the scenario in his interview:

The PE teacher did not bother us much during the whole FE period. He introduced me to the class at the first lesson and I was left to do whatever I liked. Once when I sought help from him concerning the misbehaviour of the pupils during my lessons, he came to my class unwillingly and scolded the pupils for not behaving

well. He suggested that I should adopt a tougher line in managing the pupils. The pupils' discipline was much better during his presence. After that, he did not come to help again. Is it the proper way that a PE teacher should treat the student teacher? Is it really necessary to be so cruel to the pupils? (Kai)

It was not until the incidents of fighting that close supervision and didactic advice were suggested to Kin concerning his class management. But, Kin commented, "He (the PE teacher) talked to me after each lesson and reminded me to take an 'iron and blood' strategy to deal with the band five pupils. Of course, I do not agree." With little help perceived by them, the socialising impacts of the PE teachers appeared to be less significant when compared with that of their first FE.

On the other hand, their favourable remarks indicated the significant socialising impacts that the tutors had exerted on their socialisation in the field setting. They favoured those practices with "caring attitude in the form of comforting them", "frequent contact", "pinpointing their weaknesses", "helping them to analyse problems" and most important of all, "monitoring them" and "making them experience progress in their teaching". They perceived these efforts and feedbacks in supervision as "constructive" and "helpful". Shing's dialogue below amplifies most of their feelings on the kind of supervision that this group of participants perceived useful in their professional development:

We had more contacts. We even discussed the teaching during my sports training in the Institute after daily teaching in school. I had more opportunity to seek help from her... As I was teaching hurdling in her first visit, she found that some pupils were participating actively while the others were standing aimlessly near the basketball poles... She said that my relationship with the pupils was not good and my inability to plan and select interesting activities for them was the main problem... She recalled all these comment again and asked me to reflect on each of the issues. She expected to see improvement in her second visit. It was really useful and impressive. (Shing)

This group of participants did not think that they had related any of their teaching in the FE with their secondary school PE teachers because they did not encounter much learning and teaching during their school days. Shing said, “My teachers did not teach much in their PE lessons. From Form one to three, we had free activities once every two lessons.” Kai just said coolly, “My secondary school PE teachers were out of my mind for a long time.” Ho recalled, “I did not try to adopt any teaching methods from my teachers in the secondary school. There was nothing worth imitating.” The experience of negative models from their secondary school teachers caused them to adopt a rather sympathetic attitude to pupils’ misbehaviour. It exerted some influence on their occupational socialisation but they seemed not to recognise the full extent of this.

Eventually, all of them obtained a pass in their second FE. When asked about their confidence to be PE teachers, they expressed that they all had confidence to teach within the teaching content that they were familiar with. They tended to appraise their capabilities with their immediate impression and experience that they learnt in the past two FEs. Ho’s appraisal was that he was good at a number of sports and he had managed successfully in dealing with the most difficult class in his FE. Although Kin was troubled by the case of fighting among his pupils, he thought that he had experienced the most difficult time in his learn-to-teach and that was why he became confident. Thus, he thought that he would not have any problems in teaching. Kai’s self-assessment was that he had improved in every aspect of PE teaching as the result of the two FEs and he was confident to teach those activities that he was particularly good at. In this respect, they did not change much in their taken-for-granted conception. Shing illustrated a fuller picture of their “confused” confidence to become PE teachers:

Concerning my adequacy or confidence to teach PE, it depends much on what physical activities I am going to teach. I am confident to teach the physical activities as recommended in the Syllabus for secondary school pupils. However, if I come across pupils with better skill proficiency than I have, I’ll make them

humble and submissive when they do not pay attention to my teaching. I can be a good PE teacher by concentrating more on how to select suitable and interesting activities rather than executing an excellent demonstration. It is difficult to select suitable activities to entertain every pupil for there are always individual differences among pupils. Skill proficiency is my weakness. I think I have to practise harder. (Shing)

This group of participants experienced more serious discipline problems in their second FE but they thought that they had more confidence to handle their teaching problems. They opened themselves up by expanding their conforming and compliance strategies with the pupils and tutors to adopt a variety of means to survive in their second FE. They perceived the function of catharsis as the purpose of PE for the pupils, and the skill proficiency and communication with the pupils were important criteria for PE teaching. Practical experience continued to be their preferred mode of professional learning. They shifted their reliance to their tutors as their influential socialising agents. Their perception of the confidence to become PE teachers was somewhat confused.

## **7.8 Summary and Discussion**

The findings of this study phase confirm that different groups of participants socialised in distinctive ways concerning their teacher perspectives in terms of orientations, dispositions, professional conceptions, socialising strategies and perceptions on their socialising agents. Participants with coaching orientation regained their confidence from their reality shock in their second FE. They opened up their custodial thinking to the socialising impacts of the teacher education programme and their tutors. They shifted their professional conceptions from bringing fun to promoting learning for their pupils. Those with “solidaristic” orientation carried on with their progressive aptitude concerning their teaching. They exhibited proactive and initiative-oriented professional learning and teaching attitudes throughout their learning-to-teach process.

Promoting pupils' learning continued to be the job of a PE teacher in their eyes. Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness shifted their belief in the importance of PE teachers from intuitive conception to skills proficiency and social competence. Although possessing an apprehensive orientation and the disposition of less concrete conception of their thinking, they benefited from favourable nurturing professional learning environment. Bringing fun to their pupils and motivating them to participate became their purpose of teaching PE. Those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations still held a pessimistic view of PE teaching. They were rather custodial in their conception that teaching PE meant discipline and control throughout the two FEs. The group with an easy-going style stressed the function of catharsis as the purpose of PE. They stuck closely with their care-free attitude in their professional learning.

All of them were found to have expanded their socialising strategies in tackling their dissonance in the second FEs. They included evaluating, improving teaching, holding pupils accountable for their learning and impressing pupils with their sports skill competence as measures for improving their instructional process. The second group of measures include adopting a humanistic, disciplinary, controlling and ignoring approaches as well as bribing the hidden leaders to enable better management of the disruptive pupils. The third group of socialising strategies concerned the adoption of social strategies such as showing friendliness, sharing, pleasing and caring attitude as well as complying with pupils' suggestions for establishing better relationships with the pupils. Others strategies concerned developing participants' professional enrichment. They included seeing the professional learning as a sharing of experience and extending professional learning to involve the managerial and administrative work of PE teachers. The findings illustrate participants' professional enrichment and development as the results of the socialisation effects from the teacher education programme after the first FE. They also illustrate the active human agency of the participants in determining their

socialisation processes.

However, different groups of participants were found to have shifted their curriculum expectation on the teaching modules regardless of their orientations and dispositions in this study phase. Practical experience and pedagogical knowledge became their preferred professional learning mode. The change in their curriculum expectation towards the preference of applicative mode of knowledge was resulted from the experience of their first FE. With practical teaching experience, all participants understood more about the realities of teaching. Naturally, they attended more to those associated with their future teaching. Moreover, they had to tackle another FE at the end of their course which determined their graduation.

Socialising impacts from significant others on the participants such as those stemming from their primary and secondary school PE teachers, coaches and parents identified in the pre-training phase were diminishing in this study phase. The participants also experienced relatively less socialising impact from the supporting PE teachers while the influence of the tutors and the teacher education programme were significant. The major findings concerning the changes in aspects of the teacher perspectives of different groups as the result of the second FE is shown in table 9.

Apart from tracking the teacher perspectives of different groups of participants, three particular issues concerning the conceptualisation and organisation of the FE in the Hong Kong Institute of Education, the socialising impacts of the PE teacher education programme and the fading out of the influence of the significant others will be picked up and discussed in Chapter VIII.

The findings of this professional reorientation phase not only confirm different typological groups of pre-service PE teachers in the Hong Kong Institute of Education, but also illuminate further the development of their teacher perspectives and promote better understanding of their socialisation experience in the second FE and teaching modules. The subsequent chapter offers a summary discussion concerning the pre-service

occupational socialisation of different groups of participants. The development of their professional conceptions, socialising strategies and the impacts of their socialising agents will be addressed synoptically and conclusions drawn.



Participants with orientations towards	Professional Conceptions (Purposes of PE/ requirements for a PE teacher)	Socialising Strategies (Means of handling dissonance/ professional learning)	Socialising agents (Socializing events and people)
Coaching	-Motivating pupils to learn.	-Evaluating practices -Improving teaching -Impressing pupils with sports skill proficiency -Practical knowledge and pedagogical focus	-PE teacher education programme -FE as satisfying experience that helped them to regained their confidence -Tutors -Socialising impact of the coach faded out
Teaching affinity	-Promoting learning -Skill proficiency -Managerial competence -Social competence -instructional skills	-Adopting humanistic approach -Improving teaching -Hold both themselves and their pupils accountable for teaching and learning -Involving in the administrative and managerial functions -Applicative knowledge from practical modules -Knowing all for theoretical modules	-PE teacher education programme -FE as successful experience that consolidated their progressive teaching aptitude -Tutors -Supporting teachers - Socialising impact from the secondary school PE teachers faded out
Apprehensiveness	-Bringing fun to pupils -Motivating pupils to participate in their activities	-Adopting social strategies through showing friendliness, sharing and caring attitude to the pupils -Maintaining dialogues with pupils -Complying with the pupils' suggestions -Questioning the PE teacher education programme -Experiencing mismatch of professional learning between the tutors and the participants	FE as partly successful experience that helped them to regain their PE teacher's identity -Good school environment -Pupils with good discipline -Supporting teachers -tutors
Pragmatic considerations	-Pessimistic view in PE teaching -PE teaching meant discipline and control -Managerial task competence	-Establishing authority and control over the pupils -Treating themselves as if they were passers-by -Putting the blame on others -Improving their teaching. --Experiencing mismatch of professional learning between the tutors and the participants	-FE as a difficult experience that caused them to think of a variety of strategies -PE teacher education programme -Tutors
An easy-going style	-Pessimistic view on PE teaching -Let off steam purpose	-Avoiding pushing pupils too much -Pleasing and complying with the pupils -Bribing the hidden leaders -Ignoring and pretending to see nothing -Preferring applicative and practical knowledge -Experiencing the theory-practice dilemma of the theoretical knowledge	-FE as an successful experience that confirmed their confidence to become PE teachers -Tutors -Negative secondary school PE experience

Table 9: The changes in aspects of the teacher perspectives for different groups of participants as the result of the second school experience.

## **Chapter VIII**

### **Discussion: Pre-service PE Teachers' Occupational Socialisation**

## **8.1 Introduction**

As discussed earlier, there are a few studies on understanding pre-service PE teachers and how they shape their course of action to become PE teachers. In Hong Kong, the training of PE teachers is based either on the traditional practices of the teacher educators or training models of the Western world. We do not have much information regarding how pre-service PE teachers interact with their training programme and the socialization processes as they are engaged in their training. The present study aimed to generate information from the perspectives of pre-service teachers to enhance the quality of the existing PE teacher education curriculum.

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings from this study. There is a discussion on how the knowledge could be obtained from conducting the research. The implications of the socialization processes of the different groups of pre-service PE teachers are highlighted in the subsequent section. The significance of their teacher perspectives identified in this investigation will also be examined. This chapter ends with a discussion of the importance of listening to the voice of pre-service PE teachers in the provision of quality teacher education programme.

## **8.2 The knowledge obtained from conducting the research**

In this study, the underlining assumption of the best way to understand the perceptions, beliefs and values of the pre-service PE teachers is to obtain information directly from them. Knowing the orientation of newly enrolled pre-service PE teachers and having a better understanding of how they learn is critical if the programme designed is to help in their socialization to become competent PE teachers. The methods employed in this study laid emphasis on understanding the learner's perspective. The analysis of their teacher perspectives can thus serve as an important knowledge base for programme

improvement. Our study has indicated that the voice of the pre-service PE teachers should be adequately considered for the development of providing quality PE teacher education programmes.

In this section, a more personal style is used to report the learning gained in this investigation. When I first began the investigation by asking questions and listening to the pre-service PE teachers' views on their occupational socialisation processes, I did not expect to obtain such a rich and fruitful account of the processes. I knew that I had to know more about them as well as encouraging them to say and write as much as they could in different phases of data collection. I found that I could not just ask questions and expect answers, nor could I take their responses literally. I needed to think from their perspectives, consider their intentions and construct the complexity of their contextual elements in order to make interpretations and gain an understanding of their thought processes. It is a very challenging task to figure out how these pre-service PE teachers actually experience their socialisation processes.

We (with the pre-service PE teachers) used our common language in the forms of conversation and writings in the reflective journals for data collection. When reading the transcripts, I had to admit that understanding and interpreting all their meanings was not an easy task. I had to immerse myself deeply in listening to their descriptions on their learning-to-teach processes. I was determined to get to know more about them. I was convinced that they had adequate "language" to describe their socialisation experiences.

During the analysis process, I found that the emerging and recurring themes generated from the data were often embedded in their stories. Great effort had been made to preserve the authenticity and trustworthiness of the information. However, the credibility of this research is that my pre-service teachers entrusted me with their own stories. I took the ethical considerations seriously when requesting them to disclose their experiences of the socialisation processes such as explaining their rights and obligations at the very beginning of the research, adopting the informed consent approach and using

pseudo names in the forms of common Chinese names to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

During the study, the emphasis on knowing the pre-service PE teachers' learning-to-teach processes had to be shifted from the educator to the pre-service teachers themselves. They became the constructors of their socialisation experiences and established the authority of their experience. Different groups of pre-service PE teachers spoke about their growing understanding of their socialisation processes, which they found dynamic, dialectical, stressful and sometimes annoying. To a certain extent, this enhanced their self-understanding in their professional learning and promoted their growth as a teacher.

The experience of struggling to analyse the scripts of the interviews and reflective journals has opened my eyes and mind to a deeper appreciation of what my pre-service teachers have said about their socialisation processes. I was aware that the expressions of their experiences were delicate and might easily be misinterpreted and misrepresented. Accordingly, a variety of means, such as the use of member check, peer debriefers and triangulation methods, were adopted to ensure that their meanings were authentically presented.

I, as a teacher educator for nearly twenty years, have never fully understood my pre-service PE teachers and the variety ways in which they experienced their pre-service occupational socialisation processes. Yet, I could not claim that I had known them all in depth after this study. At least, I had a snapshot of each group of them to present to the readers. The images in these snapshots are important and provide me with a fuller appreciation of the complexities of their learning-to-teach processes. Accordingly, the understanding will enable me and possibly other teacher educators, to see the consequences of our actions and have better interactions with them.

What belongs to me is that I have learnt from the process of designing the research, collecting data, analysing the scripts of the interviews and reflective journals, the

presence as well as the words of twenty pre-service PE teachers who volunteered their time and their ideas about their professional learning and development. I have learnt to step back in my analysis to be able to see their responses in the larger context of all the information they conveyed to me. I have more respect now for the complexities of the messages in those interviews and reflective journals. More importantly, I have better understanding of my pre-service teachers and the complexity and difficulties that they encounter in their pre-service occupational socialisation processes.

The findings in this study show similarities as well as differences when compared with the findings of previous socialisation research. It is illuminative in the sense that it is the study of human experience. Although it is not designed to provide for generalisation, readers, practitioners and researchers may find the results enlightening.

### **8.3 The pre-service PE teachers**

“What characteristics, past experiences, dispositions and orientations did the participants bring to their PE teacher education programme?” In addressing this research question, interviews were conducted with twenty pre-service teachers. A major finding is that the study has identified five distinct groups of students with orientations towards coaching, teaching affinity, apprehensiveness, pragmatic considerations and an easy-going style. They possessed distinctive pre-training teacher perspectives concerning their personality, physical attributes, attitudinal dispositions and professional conceptions. They were also found to socialise in distinctive ways, through adopting a variety of socialising strategies and possessing different views on their socialising agents along different phases of the PE teacher education programme. Below is a summary describing the pre-service occupational socialisation processes of each individual group:

### **Participants with an orientation towards coaching**

This group of participants joined the teacher education with the disposition of being nurtured in their sports training and achievement. The sports-related continuation theme and to become coaches in the elite sporting world are the reasons for their career choice. For them, PE teaching meant sports coaching and being PE teachers was a step to becoming elite coaches. Dominated by their sports performance-oriented thinking, they were relatively custodial in attending to only the pedagogical know-how of the teacher education programme.

The first school experience became the critical socialising event for this group of participants. Experiencing the reality shock with PE teaching, they began to be aware that their personal attributes of physical prowess in terms of “fit, strong, skilful and active” was inadequate to tackle teaching problems in school. They adjusted themselves by shifting their focus on the survival skills concerning the organizational, managerial and social task competences in fulfilling the job of a PE teacher. They shifted their thinking towards a more progressive view of teaching. They realised that “bringing fun to pupils” was not the sole purpose of PE teaching and accepted the ideal of “promoting pupils’ learning” at the end of the pre-service occupational socialisation process.

They extended their socialising strategies from “adopting internal adjustment through compromise and reconciliation with the pupils” to “evaluating their own practices, improving their teaching and impressing pupils through their sports skill competence to resolve their dissonances in the FEs”. They preferred the pedagogical knowledge of the teacher education curriculum that directly helped them to teach in schools. They chose their professional learning in the forms of practical training, competitions and performance. They expected that their tutors should be proficient in skills like their coaches.

They first regarded their coaches as influential persons and sport training and sports achievement as their critical socialising events. The reality of PE teaching such as

pupils' indiscipline, "non-suit" problems and complaints from the janitors in the first FE caused them to realise that their supporting teachers and tutors were the ones from whom they could learn and could be relied on to solve their immediate teaching problems. The reality shock opened up their custodial orientation from relying solely on their sports experience to attending to the content of the PE teacher education programme and the lessons learnt from the first FE. They shifted the attention of their professional learning to their tutors, the teacher education programme and the supporting teachers while the socialising impacts of their coaches diminished significantly at the end of their pre-service socialisation process.

### **Participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity**

The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity joined the teacher education programme with the disposition of being nurtured in positive secondary school PE experiences and the role modelling of their PE teachers and parents. They possessed teaching orientation with the service theme of contributing something to pupils' education as the reason for their career choice. They tended to be liberal, progressive, self-initiated and proactive in their professional socialisation process.

The dispositions of high job satisfaction, strong identity with their work and the PE teacher education programme exerted socialising impacts throughout their pre-service occupational socialisation. Promoting learning was identified as their professional conception. They tended to adopt a progressive view on teaching and identified a relatively wide spectrum of competences namely personal characteristics, organisational, managerial, social and instructional skills for fulfilling the job of a PE teacher.

When compared with the other groups of participants, they were found to adopt a variety of socialising strategies for resolving their dissonance. They expanded the strategies from reflecting on their teaching to "making demands on both themselves and their pupils towards learning", to "expecting learning as sharing of experience,



communicating with pupils and extending their professional learning through experiencing the administrative and managerial functions of a PE teacher”. They changed their curriculum expectation from the “knowing all” to attend more to the pedagogical knowledge after the first FE.

Their socialising agents included the pupils, the supporting teachers, the tutors and the PE teacher education programme. They perceived these socialising agents as facilitators in their learning-to-teach process. The impacts of their secondary school PE teachers and parents were found to diminish eventually. They perceived their professional learning as a kind of commitment. They made the best effort to acquire their professional knowledge and facilitate their future professional performance regardless of the people concerned, the effectiveness of implementation and the nature of the teaching modules whether they were practical and theoretical ones. They inculcated themselves with a high respect for the PE teachers who would take the responsibility for educating pupils physically and morally.

### **Participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness**

This group of participants were less skilful pre-service PE teachers concerning their unimpressive physical appearance and weak sports skill proficiency. They had relatively limited involvement in PE in their secondary school years and had rather a low image of themselves. They lacked confidence to become PE teachers and struggled hard to improve and confirm their identity. With an orientation towards apprehensiveness, they were less custodial and tended to react to immediate experience. They did not have concrete conception about the characteristics of PE teachers and teaching.

The first FE was their critical socialising event. Their weaknesses and inadequacy to become PE teachers were intensified when encountering the reality of teaching. Their inability to impress their pupils and ineffective teaching caused them to reappraise their preconception of the requirement of PE teachers in teaching. They shifted from attending

to their intuitive conception of “being liked by the pupils” to “focusing on physical skill proficiency, instructional and social competences” for surviving in schools. Bringing fun to their pupils was identified as the goal of their PE teaching.

They shifted their socialising strategies from “adopting the impression management by projecting themselves in a better image” to “using a variety of social strategies” to handle their teaching problems. They intentionally showed friendliness, sharing and caring attitude to the pupils. They maintained dialogues, made compromises and complied with the pupils for resolving their dissonance. From attending to the “knowing that” of the curriculum, they questioned the structure and the mode of professional knowledge of the teacher education programme. Practical knowledge in the forms of the mastery of module contents and physical skills were their preferred mode of professional learning. They expected that their tutors would be the “instructors” who could help them to acquire the experiences of the skills, activities and affective values through direct involvement.

Concerning the socialising agents, they started with the socialising impacts from the PE experiences of their primary school years. The PE teacher education programme and the teaching realities in the FEs exerted considerable dialectical impacts on their socialisation process. Programmatic “wash out” of the teacher education programme was particularly common for them. It illustrates the changes in their belief from the messages of the teacher education programme to the realities of teaching. The nurturing environment including the mentorship from the supporting PE teachers, positive feedbacks from the tutors and pupils without discipline problems were important for their pre-service occupational socialisation in field setting in the second FE.

### **Participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations**

This group of participants joined the teacher education programme with the employment security theme uppermost in their mind. The pursuit of better employment

opportunity was their main reason for joining the PE teacher education programme. They were relatively experienced when compared with the other groups of participants before entering the Institute. As recalled from the analysis of the pre-training phase, one participant decided to give up her study in a nurse training school, another took the A-level Examination on three occasions and the third one had made two attempts before being accepted by the Institute. With such an “instrumental orientation” (Goldthorpe et al, 1975), joining teacher education was a means to an end for them. They were sophisticated and the mission of teaching seemed to be stultifying. They were rather custodial in terms of thinking and acting in accordance with pragmatic considerations. “Winning and losing episodes in sports competitions” were recalled as their critical incidents concerning PE at the beginning of their pre-service socialisation process. They would neither strive for improvement as the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity nor fight for higher achievement, as did those with an orientation towards coaching. Very often, they were inclined to find excuses for not being able to perform well.

They possessed a pessimistic view of PE teaching. For them, PE teaching meant discipline training. Effective teaching had to be accomplished through adopting the custodial control orientation with an authoritarian way of managing the pupils. Their perceptions of managerial and social task competence were maintained as important requirements for PE teaching.

Their success in the first school FE reinforced their custodial and instrumental orientations, which was consistent and dominant throughout their pre-service development. Their dispositions were so custodial that their tutors and supporting teachers seemed to exert relatively little socialising impacts on this group of participants when compared with their pragmatic attitude.

### **Participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style**

The participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style had relatively vague

conceptions about PE. With an easy-going attitude, they had relatively little expectations of themselves and the subject. They joined the teacher education programme because they had no other career option. Some of them thought that it was easy and comfortable to be PE teachers. Others just accepted what had been offered to them. They were rather shaky in their thinking. Being obsequious, following the instructions and trying to find the easiest way of completing the tasks were their common ways of handling their socialising process.

Like the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations, they possessed a pessimistic view on school PE ever since their unpleasant experience of being treated unfairly by the PE teachers during their secondary school years. Through their apprenticeship of observation as pupils in school, they disliked the idea of adopting punishment as a way of maintaining discipline. They believed that the function of PE in school should be catharsis. They stressed that pupils' pressure from their "academic" subjects could be released through physical activities. The mastery of instructional competence, improvement in skill proficiency and the acquaintance with the social task competence were perceived as important requirements to fulfil the job of a PE teacher and to survive in school.

They adopted a variety of socialising strategies including pleasing their pupils, conforming to the demands of their tutors, complying with the requirements of the Institute, arranging easier tasks for the pupils, ignoring and pretending they had seen nothing happening in order to resolve their dissonance. They questioned the relevance of the teacher education programme and the programmatic practices advocated by the Institute. Similar to the participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness, programmatic "washout" was also significant for them. What they expected from the PE teacher education programme was to know bits and pieces from all modules. The tutors, in their mind, should act as role models. They preferred to learn from practical experiences.

The experiences of being treated unfairly by the secondary school PE teachers and the difficulties encountered in the FEs were their main socialising agents, which caused them to neglect and oppose some of the contents of the teaching modules. They were found to socialise with practices of their supporting PE teachers and the prevailing PE practices in schools. They were ready to open themselves up to the influence of other socialising agents because of their carefree characteristics.

The identification of the groupings of participants serves as the practical typology for describing the characteristics of the participants in this study. The existing research literatures only highlight those with coaching and teaching orientations. The groupings identified in this study, add to the current information with diversified entry characteristics of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong. The longitudinal type of study in this investigation also supports the studies conducted by Wright (2001) and Matanin and Collier (2003) concerning the information of developmental changes of pre-service PE teachers along their socialisation phases. The findings from this study help to provide a more comprehensive view for the understanding of pre-service PE teachers and their processes of learning-to-teach. The complexity of socialisation processes for different groups of pre-service PE teachers illustrates the factors and dynamics that have shaped the pre-service PE teachers' occupational socialisation processes.

Another finding from this study is the different dimensions of the teacher perspectives of these five groups of participants. Below is the discussion of each of them:

## **8.4 Orientations**

### **8.4.1 Career Choice**

“Why do pre-service PE teachers join the teacher training programme?” This study reveals that the participants have related their career choices with the themes of

sports-continuation, services, coaching and employment security. These findings provide further support to many of the previous studies conducted in this area (Pooley, 1972, 1975; Templin et al 1982; Lawson, 1983a, 1983b; Dewar and Lawson, 1984; Dewar, 1989; Dodds et al, 1991; Curtner-Smith, 1988; 2001; O'Bryant et al, 2000). The participants also articulated "an absence of occupational alternatives" (the participants with orientations towards an easy-going style and apprehensiveness) and "pragmatic reasons" (the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations) as context-specific attractors and facilitators for joining the teacher education programme.

#### **8.4.2 Biographical experiences**

The participants in this study brought to their teacher education programme a variety of pre-training teacher perspectives. These early biographical experiences exerted considerable influence and guided the participants' attitudes towards what was regarded as relevant and useful in their subsequent PE teacher education programme. The findings support Lawson's assumption that occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers starts with the phase of acculturation illustrating the impacts of biographical experiences. In congruence with the findings of similar studies (Lortie 1975, Curtner-Smith, 1998, 2001; Wright, 2001; Matanin and Collier, 2003), the participants' pre-training values in this study were persistent that affected their expectations and perceptions on the teacher education programme. Teacher educators have to be aware and begin to design ways to explore and deal with such powerful pre-training teacher perspectives that pre-service PE teachers have brought to the teacher education programme. Pre-service PE teachers need to be convinced that their career will be concerned with developing life long learning and learning-to-teach, regardless of the reasons behind their career choice. Templin's (1984) recommendation is worth considering. He suggests the importance of inducting pre-service PE teachers at the beginning of their teacher education programme into the

awareness of whether they want to teach or not, their levels of commitment, as well as adopting strategies to develop their commitment to PE teaching.

#### **8.4.3 Programmatic Expectations**

In this study, only those participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity identified PE teaching as their primary determinant for joining the teacher education programme while others especially the participants with orientations towards coaching and pragmatic considerations articulated other hidden agendas. Obviously, this resulted in differences among their perceived teacher roles. The conflicting expectations of most participants complicated their socialization process and required them to negotiate with their Institute tutors and other participants throughout their pre-service socialization period. It is necessary to help the pre-service PE teachers to examine their past and determine how it has shaped their current expectations about teaching.

It would be an ideal situation if every pre-service PE teacher could possess a positive attitude in their professional learning adopted by those with an orientation towards teaching affinity. They are always ready to learn at any time and anywhere despite unfavourable environment and provision. From the example of the positive socialization process of the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity, recruitment policies of the Institute should be reviewed and revised in such way that more potential candidates with a strong mission towards education can be accepted into the PE teacher education programme.

#### **8.4.4 Significant Others**

The findings indicate that some pre-service PE teachers carried with them their teachers' and coaches' images, roles and task-orientations in relation to an identification of PE teachers. These people had helped them to develop their perspectives on teaching. Such influences have also been found by many other studies (Lortie, 1975, Schemmp,

1989; Hutchinson, 1993; Doolittle et al, 1993; Green, 1998; Curtner-Smith, 1999, 2001). Role models in schools are found to be powerful and pervasive pre-training “subjective warrants” or “filters” that have influenced pre-service PE teachers’ perceptions in the occupational socialisation process.

However, the impacts of these significant others diminished after their first FE while the influence of the PE teacher education programme, the tutors and PE teachers in schools appeared to exert greater socialising influences on the pre-service PE teachers. All participants admitted that they recollected little of the practices of their coaches, secondary school PE teachers or any of the experiences from their critical incidents of their pre-training phase in their learning-to-teach process. Perhaps, Lortie’s (1975) apprenticeship of observation conception is correct. What pupils learnt about teaching is imaginary. The pre-service PE teachers are like the audience in the theatre. They just watch the play but never go backstage. The impacts of the apprenticeship period only introduce the pupils to the tasks of teaching and encourage their development of the identification with teachers.

### **8.5 Attitudinal Dispositions**

Different groups of participants were found to think and act in prevalent ways during their pre-service occupational socialisation process. The participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity always demonstrated their progressive thinking of being considerate, proactive and self-initiated in their professional learning. They possessed liberal attitudes in responding to all socialising experiences in all phases of data collection. For them, “liberal attitude” refers to tolerant, open-minded and free from prejudiced attitudes towards learning. At the other extreme, those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations exhibited custodial thinking dominated by whether their learning could facilitate their employment opportunity and future teaching. They only



responded positively to those learning episodes and opportunities that were beneficial to them. In between, the participants with an orientation towards coaching were fairly custodial in their thinking before the first FE. They were dominated in their thinking and behaviour by equating teaching with coaching and their professional learning as sports training and achievement. It was not until they experienced the shock of the teaching reality in the first FE that they started to change their professional learning attitude. The participants with orientations towards apprehensiveness and an easy-going style were student teachers with less custodial thinking. Their responses to their professional learning were found to depend on the contextual constraints and explicit requirements.

Accordingly, their cognitive and behavioural tendencies may be explained as ranging from “custodial” to “progressive” representing their beliefs and ways of thinking and acting. The word “progressive” is used to describe those participants whose thinking is flexible, open-minded and proactive in all kinds of professional experiences. They tended to advance their knowledge and improve their teaching. In congruence with the articulation of Goldthorpe et al (1975) describing their “progressive workers”, progressive pre-service PE teachers were represented by the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity in this study. They are always ready to face changes in selected ways to improve their teaching. They become “role innovative” meaning that they revolutionise PE and the role of PE teaching in schools to maximize learning opportunities for their pupils. The word “custodial” signifies the kinds of conservative and restrictive inclinations. The participants with custodial attitude like those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations possessed very strong preconceived value judgements of their own and tended to protect and preserve such values in the existing curriculum and practices. It is difficult for them to change.

Concerning their prevalent ways of acting and responding, the participants displayed their perspectives differently ranging from dominant utilitarian to non-dominant liberal. The word “dominant” is used to describe the participants’



ways of thinking and acting were found persistently to affect what and how the participants could learn in the teacher education programme. This generally supports similar findings revealed by a number of studies of PE practitioners in the field (Hutchinson, 1993; Green 1998 and Curtner-Smith, 1998; 1999; 2001; O'Bryant et al 2000; McCullick, 2002; Matanin and Collier, 2003).

This postulation of the continuum of pre-service PE teachers' attitudinal dispositions illustrates an alternative interpretation and adds to the current research knowledge in explaining pre-service PE teachers' prevailing ways of believing, thinking and acting. In return, closer attention has to be given to how these teacher perspectives influenced the participants' development in the PE teacher education programme. With a better understanding of the participants' dispositions, PE teacher educators may guide programme development and possible improvement in programme effectiveness as suggested by Hutchinson and Bushner (1996) and Hutchinson (1993).

## **8.6 Professional Conceptions**

Different groups of participants socialised with a variety of professional conceptions concerning the purposes of PE and the perceived competences required for PE teaching. These included diverse views on PE teaching ranging from progressive to custodial. The purposes of PE perceived by the participants included "promoting learning for the pupils" (the participants with orientations towards teaching affinity and coaching), "bringing fun to pupils" (the participants with orientations towards coaching and apprehensiveness), "maintaining discipline" (the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic consideration) and seeing PE as cathartic (the participants with orientations towards coaching and an easy going style). The perceived competences required by the PE teachers covered sportive appearance, proficiency in sports skill, instructional, social, organisational and managerial task competences.

Obviously, some of these conceptions were formed before joining the teaching education programme while others were shaped during their teacher training and after facing the realities of teaching. The formation and shifting of the participants' professional conceptions as found in this study illustrates that they were socialised dialectically and dynamically when interacting with their pre-training perspectives, teacher education programme and realities of teaching in schools.

It is surprising to note that there is a range of the participants' professional conceptions concerning the purposes of teaching PE for school pupils. They appear to be largely individualistic, personalistic, group specific and context bound rather than professional and collective. Apparently, the teacher education programme cannot inculcate pre-service PE teachers with clear conceptions of schooling and PE teaching. On the other hand, the resistance of the participants to accept the programmatic message of the teacher education programme may be another reason. This demonstrates the power of the participants' agency in response to a variety of social institutions in determining their perceptions of the purpose of PE in schools. PE teacher educators should provide opportunities for the participants to formulate their vision. They will need to provide the pre-service PE teachers with detailed information about the context and the possible purposes of PE in schools.

## **8.7 Socialising Strategies**

### **8.7.1 Strategies for resolving dissonances**

How did the participants react when they came across different stages of teacher education experiences? Different groups of the participants were found to adopt different socialising strategies for resolving their dissonance in their FEs. Interestingly, they expanded the scope of such strategies in their second FE illustrating considerable professional learning and development between the two FEs. The socialising strategies

adopted by different groups of participants in solving their dissonances between the two FEs are summarised in the following table:

Participants with an orientation towards	Socialising strategies adopted in the 1 <sup>st</sup> FE	Socialising strategies adopted in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> FE
Coaching	-Internal adjustment	-Evaluating their own practice -Improving teaching -Impressing pupils with sports skill competence
Teaching affinity	-Reasoning approach in dealing with pupils misbehaviour. -Reflection	-Adopting humanistic approach -Improving teaching -Holding both themselves and their pupils accountable for teaching and learning -Involving in the administrative and managerial functions
Apprehensiveness	-Impression management	-Compromising and complying with pupils' suggestions -Maintaining dialogues with pupils -Adopting social strategies through showing friendliness, sharing and caring attitude to the pupils
Pragmatic considerations	-Controlling and building up authority in dealing with pupils' misbehaviour -“Psyching out” in dealing with their tutors	-Establishing authority and control -Treating themselves as passers-by -Putting blame on others -Improving their teaching.
An easy-going style	-Compromising and reconciling with pupils -Fulfilling the tutors' requirement	-Pleasing and complying with the pupils -Bribing those hidden leaders -Ignoring and perceived to be pretending not to see the misbehaviour -Avoiding pushing pupils too much

Table 11: The socialising strategies adopted by different groups of participants in solving their dissonances between the two FEs.

The first group of strategies involves finding means to improve their teaching and professional learning. They include reflecting on their teaching (the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity), evaluating for improvement (the participants with orientations towards coaching, teaching affinity, pragmatic considerations and an easy-going style), making demands on both themselves and their pupils to achieve learning (the participant with an orientation towards teaching affinity), showing off their skill proficiency (the participant with an orientation towards coaching), communicating with pupils (all participants), and extending their professional learning through experiencing administrative and managerial functions (the participant with an orientation

towards teaching affinity).

The second group of strategies concerns the participants' social adaptive strategy in handling their socialising agents. These cover "psyching out" (the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations), conforming to and complying with the requirement of the tutors and teacher education programme (the participants with orientations towards pragmatic considerations and easy-going style), pleasing, reconciling with and bribing the pupils (the participants with orientations towards easy-going style and apprehensiveness).

The third group of strategies relates to their self-defensive mechanisms for finding excuses to comfort themselves. The strategies comprise adopting internal adjustment (the participants with an orientation towards coaching), "closing their eyes" to pupils' misbehaviour (the participants with an orientation an easy-going style), finding excuses (the participants with orientations towards pragmatic considerations and easy-going style and apprehensiveness) and being "passers-by" (the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations).

The participants demonstrated three types of socializing strategies, illustrating their active role in dealing with socialisation in the field setting in schools. This illustrates the "sub-cultures" of shared role structures, perspectives, problems and solutions that different groups of them adopt to survive or prosper in their dynamic and dialectical FEs.

The strategies also represent the pre-service PE teachers' "studentship", explaining a variety of behaviours that empower them with choices. The first strategy of improving their teaching signifies positive professional development demonstrated by the pre-service PE teachers. Their social adaptive strategy can be regarded as their coping strategy that forms a part of their daily task in their social interaction. Self-defensive mechanisms are employed to protect themselves from destructive anomalies in the sports field. As suggested by Graber (1989), although some of the strategies appear to undermine the programmatic messages of their PE teacher education programme, they

ought to be understood in terms of etiology rather than simply eliciting “blame” on the participants for focusing on the short cuts.

The findings of adaptive mechanisms in earlier studies such as role playing, internalised adjustment, strategic compliance, positive and negative strategic redefinition (Lacey, 1977; Zeichner and Tabachnick, 1984) and studentship (Graber, 1989) or impression management (Goffman, 1990) are identified. Besides, the strategies of improving teaching, adapting socially and using defensive mechanisms are possibly other classifications adopted by pre-service PE teachers to resolve their dissonance in FEs. On the other hand, preparing participants to anticipate their teaching problems, introducing them to a variety of strategies for solving this problems and committing them to assess the causes, actions and consequences of their action are the issues that should be taken up in the PE teacher during the teacher education programme.

### **8.7.2 Professional Learning**

How did the participants learn professionally? From the findings of this study, different groups of participants had distinctive modes of learning in their professional preparation before the first FE. They had curriculum expectations that differed from their PE teacher education programme including knowing “all” (the participants with teaching affinity), “how” (the participants with an orientation towards coaching), “that” (the participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness), “bits and pieces from all” (the participant with an orientation towards an easy-going style), and “why” (the participants with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations). They expected their tutors to function as their “facilitators”, “highly skilled in sports exponents”, “instructors”, “role models” and “master craft persons” respectively. However, they shifted towards attending to the applicative mode of knowledge of the teacher education programme related to

teaching after the first FE. They tended to learn from the practical knowledge that facilitated their future teaching.

Accordingly, the participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity tried their best to learn as much as possible in the teaching modules. Those with orientations towards coaching and apprehensiveness paid particular attention to the teacher education programme ever since their failure to tackle their first FE. Those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations attended mostly to the ready-cook content while the participants with an orientation towards an easy-going style put particular focus on the practical experiences of the teacher education programme throughout their professional socialization.

The diverse expectations of the participants of their PE teacher education programme and their tutors before the first FE are the result of the impacts of their pre-training orientations and dispositions. The change of their preferred mode of professional learning to the pedagogical content of the teacher education programme after the first FE is caused by their experience of the reality of teaching. However, all participants preferred their professional knowledge to be learned in the form of practical experience, which should be relevant to the requirements within the professional contexts. Skills and knowledge, whether in theoretical or practical modules, were not perceived as relevant unless they could be applied for professional purposes. From the analysis, professional knowledge for them means the kinds of knowledge that facilitate their practical teaching. Such a preferred mode of professional learning was found to persist throughout their pre-service socialisation processes.

The pre-service PE teachers' mode of professional learning in this study conveys a strong programmatic message. Nevertheless, the pre-service PE teachers have to be committed to see the practical aspects of those theoretical components in their



professional practices. Having said that, the trainee's perspective as illustrated in the above analysis provides enlightening information for understanding the pre-service PE teachers' learning-to-teach processes. Such a user perspective has to be considered during the design and implementation of the PE teacher education programme.

## **8.8 Socialising Agents**

### **8.8.1 Institute Based Programme**

Most participants experienced a significant amount of their professional learning from the institute-based programme. It is evident that most of them attended particularly to the pedagogical knowledge and the practical experience in the teaching modules in the professional orientation and reorientation phases. Their acknowledgement of the enrichment and development experienced through their second year studies illustrates the significant socialising impacts of the teacher education programme. It is also evident that the participants with orientations towards apprehensiveness and easy-going style experienced significant programmatic "washout" of the impact of the teaching modules because of the teaching reality of the FEs. This illustrates the process of deliberation undertaken by these participants in appropriating relevant professional knowledge they had learnt in the teaching modules.

In this investigation, most participants believed that they had learnt more in the professional activity-oriented courses namely basketball, badminton, dance, swimming, handball and gymnastics. The professional knowledge of these physical activities is critical because these activity areas are the content of their teaching in schools. The acquisition of professional knowledge in these activity areas would have become salient when the participants were having their practical teaching in schools during their FEs.

The shifting of their curriculum expectation to the preference for pedagogical

knowledge after the first FE reaffirms the participants' beliefs concerning their preferred mode of professional learning. Pedagogical contents such as "how to organise", "how to teach", "how to select progressive stages", "how to write lesson plans", "how to teach safely" and "how to provide teaching points" were valued highly by most of the participants. These practical skills are regarded as the process knowledge that describes what and how the participants should do in their professional work. They are highly relevant for the job of PE teachers and urgently needed for their teaching practice in schools.

The adverse remarks made by the participants with orientations towards apprehensiveness and pragmatic considerations concerning how the practical modules should be implemented are worth discussing. The balance and relationship between content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge as currently assumed appears to be problematic. The tutors focused on the pedagogy while the participants preferred to acquire both types of knowledge. They thought that they would better be equipped to teach in schools with both the content and pedagogical knowledge. The mismatch in conception between the participants and tutors is evident. The relatively short professional activity-oriented unit aggravates the problem of implementation, which deserves further investigation and evaluation. Accordingly, an increase in the length of the professional activity-oriented teaching units is regarded as necessary.

Most participants, except those with an orientation towards teaching affinity, were found to have difficulties in recalling in detail their theoretical knowledge concerning curriculum models, pedagogical concepts, principles of PE, history and rules and regulations. The theoretical knowledge should be somewhere and somehow part of the contents of theoretical and professional activity-oriented modules.

It is evident that only the "replicative" mode of professional learning was adopted for some modules like the "Foundation and Principles of PE". The participants were required to replicate their "acquired" knowledge in examinations. Not much deliberation

on the concepts to local context was reported. The participants were found to have difficulty in integrating the applicability of theoretical knowledge into their professional practices from their theoretical or disciplinary-oriented modules. This resulted in little learning being experienced by the participants. The relatively short teaching unit within the complex disciplinary boundary may result in an introduction of such theories at a superficial level only. However, the participants like those with orientations with pragmatic considerations, apprehensiveness and easy-going style held quite strongly preconceptions that PE should be physical or practically oriented. They were not willing to open themselves up to theoretical knowledge without practical or experiential learning.

Moreover, it is evident that the mismatch in programmatic expectation between the tutors and pre-service PE teachers concerning the modes of professional learning was significant. All participants prefer a “practical” and “experiential” oriented teacher education programme. They thought that their professional knowledge should derive from experience, concern teaching and serve as a means of learning to teach. On the other hand, some tutors adopted an academic view of the teacher education programme and preferred to develop the pre-service PE teachers as intellectual scholars in sub-disciplines. Accordingly, transmitting knowledge and developing participants’ understanding would be the major focus. In their mind, knowledge once acquired would automatically be applied and transformed by the pre-service PE teachers in their teaching. Needless to say, the theory-practice dilemma is salient for most participants. Nevertheless, the participants did not perceive the relevance of their theoretical knowledge because they could not perceive its applicability to their future teaching. This illustrates that an over-reliance on the highly codified discipline based knowledge in the sub-discipline model regardless of its practicality and the nature of professional performance is problematic.

On the other hand, in resolving the theory-practice gap, the participants in this study preferred their professional learning to be promoted with a variety of practical deliberations, namely “applicative”, “associative” and “interpretive” from the tutors. This

was shown in their acknowledgement of professional learning from the modules of “Teaching of PE” and “Curriculum Studies in PE” experienced in the professional orientation phase. This enabled them to interpret, apply and associate theoretical knowledge into practical experience, which formed a coherent and personal philosophy of teaching. Perhaps, Eraut (1994) is right. He argues that, “It is misleading to think of knowledge as first being acquired and then later put to use. Not only does an idea get reinterpreted during use, but it may even need to be used before it can acquire any significant meaning for the user” (p.50). The implementation of the discipline-based knowledge with elements of practical experience and deliberation within contexts appears to facilitate participants’ professional learning from theoretical knowledge.

### **8.8.2 Field Experiences**

Eraut (1994) and Tang (2001) suggest that FE is very often designed according to the epistemological understanding of the teacher education institutions and schools concerned. These institutions may produce two distinct types of professional knowledge about teaching: “the theoretical / propositional” knowledge and the “craft / practical / process” knowledge. The design of the FE is primarily based on the “theory into practice” model and the “integration” principle. The assumption is that theoretical knowledge learnt in the teacher education institutions will automatically be applied by pre-service PE teachers during their practices of teaching in schools.

However, during the teaching practices, pre-service PE teachers were usually left to swim or sink in applying and integrating the theoretical knowledge in their professional learning. The first FE appears to be the second critical socialising incident. Most of the participants experienced the realities of teaching. They all transferred their focus of their preferred mode of professional learning on the pedagogical knowledge. In some cases as illustrated in the dialogues, the main concern of the participants on the FE was survival underpinned by fear. Most of the participants were found suffering from shock and strain

during the FE. Under such circumstance, the FE becomes less effective for the participants to test out their theoretical knowledge learned from the teacher education programme. To a certain extent, it indicates that the participants should be well prepared for their first practical teaching in the field settings of school.

Unlike the uni-dimensional mode of FE, the schools in the first FE not only acted as the placement sites for the pre-service PE teachers to practise their teaching, but also provided them with the “supporting teachers” as co-learners-collaborators-facilitators (Slick, 1998). This is the intention of the Hong Kong Institute of Education to move the FE to a complementary form of institute-school partnership in teacher preparation. Under such a collaborative partnership, the practical knowledge of the “supporting teachers” is to be respected and to have an equally legitimate position as the professional knowledge advocated in the teacher education institution. Accordingly, such arrangement will shift the purpose of teaching practice supervision from assessing to advising on pre-service PE teachers’ professional learning (Burton, 1998). From this perspective, a close collaboration and constant dialogue between the Institute tutors and the “supporting teachers” seems to be essential. However, relatively little evidence on such collaboration could be found in this study.

All participants except those with an orientation towards pragmatic considerations perceived the professional support offered by the “supporting teachers” positively in the first FE. The finding illustrates that the institute-school partnership model can form the complement to the teacher education programme. The incorporation of the “supporting teachers” is proved to be effective in helping the pre-service PE teachers to socialise professionally in schools.

Unlike the first FE, the pre-service PE teachers had to practise teaching “independently” in the second FE. Under such a “separatist partnership” as suggested by Furlong et al (1995), the FE schools are merely employed as a practice field for the pre-service PE teachers. The Institute and the school have their own complementary

responsibilities, knowledge domain and assessment. Pre-service PE teachers are expected to have the abilities to integrate theory and practice by themselves. However, only the participants with orientations towards teaching affinity and apprehensiveness perceived such positive professional support from the supporting teachers positively in the second FE. The participants with orientations towards coaching, pragmatic considerations and an easy-going style claimed that they got less help from the supporting PE teachers in the second FE. It illustrates the diminishing socialising impacts of the school PE teachers and ultimately, would affect the participants' performance. Most of the participants expressed that they would like to receive continuous professional support from the "supporting teachers" in the second FE and a close collaboration between the tutors and the supporting teachers would be essential. The pre-service PE teachers' need calls for a re-conceptualisation of the FE practices. Thus, the roles and functions of the socialising agents such as the institute, the FE schools, the supporting teachers and the tutors have to be clarified.

### **8.8.3 The Supporting Teachers**

The socialising impacts of the supporting teachers on the socialisation processes of the participants were significant. It was illustrated by the participants' favourable remarks on their professional learning. It was found that encouraging and supportive attitudes were thought to be important. The participants expected the supporting teachers to have frequent contact with them, to believe in their teaching, to be their models and, most important of all, to have a responsible attitudes. Their direct and indirect professional guidance in their actual teaching were also commented upon favourably. These included sharing of teaching experience, observing their lessons, providing professional advice and constructive strategies for solving their teaching problems, reserving the facility for their teaching and helping them to handle misbehaving pupils. These are the significant socialising elements concerning the ways of preferred mentorship actions expected from

the participants on their professional learning in the field setting in schools. Obviously, these are important programmatic messages for structuring the role and functions of the supporting teachers. The participants' remarks between the two FEs are summarised in the table 12:

Participants with orientations towards	Coaching	Teaching affinity	Apprehensiveness	Pragmatic considerations	An easy-going style
1 <sup>st</sup> FE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Helping them in teaching and managing the class</li> <li>-Showing demonstration</li> <li>-Giving advice on selecting the teaching content and class routine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Offering advice on managing the class</li> <li>-Observing their lessons</li> <li>-Discussing with them the teaching content</li> <li>-Helping in setting apparatus</li> <li>-Enriching their professional knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Observing their lessons</li> <li>-Providing constructive suggestions</li> <li>-Helping them to solve their teaching problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Giving comments on their planning, managing pupils and instructions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Showing demonstration</li> <li>-Commenting on the managerial skills, lesson plans and attitude towards pupils</li> </ul>
2nd FE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Leaving them to sink or swim</li> <li>-No lesson observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Showing supportive attitude</li> <li>-Observing lessons</li> <li>-Handling misbehaving pupils</li> <li>-Supplying pupils' information</li> <li>-Sharing experiences of teaching</li> <li>-Discussing and solving problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Providing good model</li> <li>-Supervising and monitoring performance</li> <li>-Observing lessons</li> <li>-Offering advice</li> <li>-Helping to manage the class</li> <li>-Offering direct assistance during lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Exhibiting irresponsible ways of conducting the lesson and managing pupils'</li> <li>-Seldom supervising their lesson</li> <li>-Offering them advice rarely</li> <li>-Expecting them to release workload only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Leaving them to sink or swim</li> <li>-Offering unfavourable comments and advice</li> </ul>

Table 12: The participants' remarks on their supportive teachers during the two FEs.

#### 8.8.4 The tutors

The participants' remarks on their tutors were found to be limited and their advice and suggestions were regarded "with little value" in the first FE. As illustrated in the participants' dialogues, there was only one supervisory visit and the time for teaching supervision seemed to be too short. The tutors appeared to adopt the role of "overseer" and "gatekeeper" (Slick, 1998). The dialogues of the participants with orientations

towards apprehensiveness, an easy-going style and pragmatic considerations reveal that the tutors rarely offered specific feedback to them. They failed to hold the participants accountable for making changes to their teaching methodologies and strategies, setting targets for improvement and providing feedback on observed teaching. They also failed to help the participants to link up the learnt theories and practical application. The findings generally disagree with the importance of the roles of the tutors as identified by some researchers (Zimpher et al, 1980; Ocansey et al, 1989).

Perhaps, Hardy's (1995a) comment can be applicable here. He criticises that "the process of supervision is a complex area, and the roles and activities are often ill-defined" (p.168). Tang (2001), in her study, shows the actual picture of the situation in the Institute. The heavy teaching supervision load and other areas of work prevented the tutors of the Hong Kong Institute of Education from maintaining adequate and effective contact with the pre-service PE teachers. It appears that the complementary partnership between the institute and the FE schools is problematic in this case.

However, in the second FE, the responsibility for "integrating" pre-service PE teachers' socialisation experience in field settings seemed to rest largely on the tutors of the Institute. The supporting teachers only offered help to the pre-service PE teachers when and if necessary. All participants except Kai perceived constructively the professional support offered by their tutors in the second FE. It illustrates the significant socialising impacts of the tutors on the participants' socialisation process. The two supervisory visits in the second FE enabled the tutors to monitor the socialising progress of the participants.

From the viewpoint of the participants, the caring and understanding attitude was found to be encouraging. They preferred a mechanism for offering specific and constructive feedback, generating improvement and monitoring progress. Within the mechanism, the participants should be helped to analyse problems, offer concrete examples for follow-up action and identify their weaknesses. Offering suggestions for



selecting interesting activities, discussing and advising them on their planning for teaching were expected. Managerial hints including advice on managing the class, information on the trouble-makers, safety precautions to be adopted when using apparatus were valued as practical. All participants expected this type of professional support offered by their tutors during the socialisation in field settings. They wanted to make improvement in certain aspects in the FEs. Remarks of the participants about their tutors between the two FEs are summarised in the following table for reference:

Participants with Orientations towards	Coaching	Teaching affinity	Apprehensiveness	Pragmatic considerations	An easy-going style
1st FE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Suggesting interesting activities to them</li> <li>-Pinpointing weaknesses</li> <li>-Providing advice on establishing relationship with the pupils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Offering them advice on managing the class</li> <li>-Observing their lessons</li> <li>-Discussing the teaching content</li> <li>-Enriching their knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Supervising them once</li> <li>-Not being helpful</li> <li>-Providing feedback with too general in nature</li> <li>-Providing praise without any help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Providing feedback with too general in nature.</li> <li>-Criticising their performance adversely.</li> <li>-Making only one supervisory visit in a hurry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Offering comments too general in nature.</li> <li>-Having the supervisory visit in a hurry</li> <li>-Causing them more stress</li> </ul>
2nd FE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Supporting and encouraging attitude</li> <li>-Call for commitment to pupils</li> <li>-Monitoring progress</li> <li>-Providing constructive feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Supporting attitude</li> <li>-Providing specific feedbacks</li> <li>-Monitoring progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pinpointing weaknesses</li> <li>-Offering examples for teaching</li> <li>-Advising on planning and managing</li> <li>-Suggesting points for teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Encouraging and understanding attitude</li> <li>-Providing advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Caring and comforting attitude</li> <li>-Frequent contact</li> <li>-Pinpointing weaknesses.</li> <li>-Helping them to analyse problems</li> <li>-Monitoring their progress</li> <li>-Providing constructive feedbacks</li> </ul>

Table 13: The participants' remarks on their tutors during the two FEs.

### **8.8.5 The FE Sites**

The positive professional learning experienced by the participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness on their second FE illustrates the importance of the nurturing environment of the FE sites. A more careful selection of FE sites for facilitating the positive occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers is recommended. Such sites should, in part, be determined in relation to the capability of the supporting teachers to provide suitable support to the pre-service PE teachers. A positive learning environment where pupils are less disruptive and respect their student teachers should be provided. Moreover, the tutors need to possess an encouraging attitude. All of the arrangements should be designed and conducted collaboratively by schools and the teacher education institute as advocated by many practitioners in the field (Dodds,1989).

Generally, the structuring of two FEs matches closely with the participants' beliefs regarding the significance of FEs. It reinforces the need for a series of FE experiences throughout the teacher education programme for their pre-service occupational socialisation processes. The roles and functions of the tutors and the supporting teachers in the supervisory process should be focused on giving advice on the participants' professional learning and helping them to link up the theories and practical application together rather than assessing their performance. Such a review may help to allow the FE to play a more influential and positive role in the pre-service occupational socialisation process of the pre-service PE teachers.

## **8.9 Other Issues**

One of the merits of conducting qualitative studies is that a closer and in-depth examination of pre-service PE teachers' socialisation experiences in the field can yield insights into the subtleties of the social reality of PE in schools which are often missed in more generalised and quantitative research. Below is the discussion of three issues resulting from the findings of this study:

### **8.9.1 Pupils' motivation during PE lessons in schools**

In this study, only those participants with an orientation towards teaching affinity recalled some positive experiences from secondary PE lessons they taught. Some participants with orientations towards an easy-going style even recollected that their experiences in their PE lessons were annoying. Moreover, all of the participants experienced frustration caused by pupils' discipline problems during their FEs. The sources of frustration to the participants came from pupils' low motivation, disruption and showing disrespect to the student teachers. Pupils tended lay emphasise on having fun rather than learning. They preferred their PE lessons as organised recess or free activities. These very often created difficulties for the trainees to accomplish what they have hoped to do in a lesson. The findings of the participants' pre-training and professional preparation experience of pupils' life in PE confirm that PE experiences in secondary schools are not always promising. The relevance of the secondary school PE curriculum and the perceptions of pupils of their experiences in the formal PE curriculum need to be examined and understood in further detail.

### **8.9.2 Dance in the Secondary School Curriculum**

Although an equal focus in games, gymnastics, swimming and dance is provided in the PE teacher education programme, most male PE participants' experiential base prior to their teacher education programme had excluded "dance" as shown in "the professional orientation phase". Accordingly, they were reluctant to include dance in their PE teaching. Attempting to broaden their awareness and appreciation of dance as a movement content form should be made. Moreover, the participants should be helped to challenge their conscious and unconscious thoughts about the stereotypes of physical activities that they might hold regarding gender and participation in physical activities.

### **8.9.3 Sports Socialisation**

All the pre-service PE teachers in this study, regardless of their groups, exhibited extensive involvement in sports before joining their teacher education programme. They have first been socialised into sports and through this made choices to pursue a sports-related career, mainly, to serve as PE teachers. The findings indicate that sports socialisation is a common phenomenon and social institution for most pre-service PE teachers in their anticipatory socialisation. This is in agreement with some of the studies in the field of PE (Lawsons, 1983a, b; Dewar and Lawson, 1984; Hutchinson, 1993). It also echoes the domination of the taken-for-granted values of “cultivating elitists”, “building character”, “making worthy use of leisure” and “life-time commitment” and most important of all “maintaining social stability” through sports in the local PE curriculum in schools. If the values of other kinds of physical activities are to be promoted, an evaluation of the content of the PE curriculum as well as the PE teacher education programme will be necessary.

### **8.10 Summary**

The above discussion summarizes the major findings and possible implications for the PE teacher education programme in the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Particular references are made to the contributions of the findings to the existing knowledge concerning the pre-service occupational socialization of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong. The teacher perspectives in the previous studies are usually described in terms of teaching PE, purposes of PE in school, FE, curriculum development and instructional elements (Arrighi & Young, 1987; Dodds, 1989; Doolittle, Dodds & Placek, 1993; Graham, 1991a; Hutchinson, 1993; Capel, 1998; Curtner-Smith, 1998). Pre-service PE teachers' teacher perspectives in this study, which add to the existing research information, include orientations, dispositions, professional conceptions, socializing

strategies and agents. The findings in this study represent an alternative interpretation of the socialization construct. The results of this study illustrate an understanding of a part of the complex, dynamic and dialectical socialization process from the perspectives of twenty pre-service PE teachers. It suggests the pertinence of more directly involving pre-service PE teachers in shaping professional socialization experiences as alluded to in the literature (Hutchinson, 1993; O'Sullivan, 1996; McCullick, 2001; Wright,2001). The final chapter will present the recommendations generated from the findings of this study.

## **Chapter IX**

### **Recommendations and Conclusions**

## **9.1 Introduction**

This final chapter presents the recommendations for improving the PE teacher education programme in the Hong Kong Institute of Education based upon the findings of the investigation made on the pre-service PE teachers' professional learning and occupational socialisation processes. It also includes suggestions made about the major issues to be followed up in future research work. The concluding discussion will indicate how an institute of education could make use of the key observations of this study to enhance the effectiveness of its programme.

## **9.2 Recommendations for the PE teacher education programme**

Pre-service PE teachers' perceptions of the existing PE teacher education programme and their preferred ways of professional learning are important to those who design and implement programmes of learning. The findings of this study are based on the perceptions of the first hand experiences of students who attended the programme 1999-2001. These findings can thus be regarded as providing useful insights for decisions to be made on programme improvement and changes. The following recommendations are offered as indicative of ways to improve existing practices of programme design and implementation.

### **9.2.1 Pre-service PE teachers' Voice**

During the interviews, it was found that the participants had a lot to say about their past, present and future. They showed their eagerness to tell the interviewer (the tutor) their points of views concerning the teacher education programme. They expressed their feelings of joy and discomfort sincerely. It is interesting to see things from the eyes of the users. We can have a clearer picture of what our teacher education programme is perceived as being and how much it is being valued. Thus, the pre-service PE teachers'

voice is one that should be listened to, albeit not uncritically. Since their ways of seeing things are quite different from the educational policy makers, teacher educators and the supporting teachers, not taking into consideration their thinking as important perspective will affect the quality of the programme design and implementation. It is advisable that a student-staff consultation committee should be set up. Then some joint discussions should be held periodically to facilitate constant conversations between the tutors and pre-service teachers. Then, views on reviewing the design of the programme and monitoring implementation issues can be exchanged. In so doing, the teacher education programme can truly meet the expectations of different parties including the pre-service teachers, the tutors and the educational policy makers. Eventually, it will help to ensure the overall quality of the programme design and implementation.

### **9.2.2 Programme Expectations**

From the findings of this study, the pre-training teacher perspectives appear to be the critical socialising agent influencing pre-service PE teachers' occupational socialisation processes. The teacher perspectives, in terms of dispositions and orientations formed before their teacher training were found persistently to affect their mode of professional learning and expectations on the teacher education programme. To engage this socialising impact effectively, opportunities for recognizing the influence of pre-service teachers' histories through introductory and sharing sessions should be initiated at the very beginning of the teacher education programme. There should be opportunities for the pre-service PE teachers to explain and exchange teacher perspectives, prior experience and influences, and preconceptions concerning the vision and mission of PE for school pupils. This will help pre-service PE teachers to articulate and assess their teacher perspectives and the programmatic expectations. It will facilitate and enhance their learning to teach too.

During their professional socialisation, pre-service PE teachers were found to



have a wide range of expectations of their socialising agents namely the teacher education programme and tutors. However, they did not simply accept the “socialising impacts” of their socialising agents, but were also socialized into the roles of PE teachers through a dialectical process of negotiation. Hence, a programme needs to be designed to help participants to have sufficient opportunities to examine their expectations and locate the causes and consequence of such expectations. The promotion of programmatic expectations will be enhanced by attending to and respecting individual expectations.

This study indicates the importance of acknowledging and respecting pre-service teachers’ preferences in the different types of modules in which they participated. Sufficient support is needed for them to examine their preferences in the PE modules. There should be ample opportunities for tutors to hold discussions with them about their preferences and the significance of these modules for their pre-service development. The reasons for offering the modules and the consequences of their omission should also be discussed. Moreover, opportunities should be provided for them to challenge the programmatic intentions based on their preferences and their assumptions about the learning-to-teach processes. The dialogues created with them should eventually help them to appreciate the value of the different practices structured for their learning.

### **9.2.3 Experience and Practical Based Learning**

The pre-service PE teachers in this study pointed out that they gained their professional knowledge from practical experiences closely related to their professional requirements within their professional contexts. The participants wanted their teacher preparation to be experience-based rather than theory-based.

In the professional orientation phase, modules that facilitate professional learning were preferred by the participants significantly, they possess the following characteristics:

- comprising rich course contents,
- providing practical knowledge for skills acquisition,

- offering theoretical knowledge and pedagogical know-how as integrated experiential learning,
- presenting the content in an interesting way and
- incorporating the “replicative”, “associative”, “applicative” and “interpretive” modes of applied knowledge.

Digesting the above- mentioned information is important for those who review the design and implementation of the PE teacher education programme in the Hong Kong Institute of Education. It is also recommended that teacher educators should take into consideration the pre-service PE teachers’ mode of learning during the implementation of their teaching modules.

The participants acknowledged that they gained a lot from the professional activity-oriented courses. From the perspective of pre-service PE teachers, the learning for them should be more experience based and practically orientated. In this regard, the professional activity orientated modules should be maintained and redesigned to increase the breadth and depth, the teaching content and enhance their mode of delivery. It is further suggested that lengthening the unit weighting to 1.5 credit point weighting (22.5 hours while the current practice is 12 to 15 hours per unit) for each physical activity is desirable. The endeavour should be to strengthen pre-service PE teachers’ professional knowledge in both the pedagogical skills and content knowledge of well-chosen physical activities.

Moreover, reports from the participants regarding their perception of the different levels of skills experienced in some of the professional activity oriented modules suggested that pre-service PE teachers need to be well equipped with the required skill proficiency before attending the core modules on professional activities. It is recommended that a baseline of skill proficiency should be regarded as a pre-requisite for taking these professional activity oriented modules. In helping pre-service PE teachers to attain the required standard of skill proficiency, enhancement programmes should be

initiated for them before the commencement of these modules. The incorporation of those “badges schemes” for skill proficiency organised by various national sporting organisation should be considered. Pre-service PE teachers may also be required to take a pre-module assessment in order to demonstrate their mastery of the required standard of skill proficiency before being allowed to attend the modules. With the above-mentioned measures, pre-service PE teachers’ professional learning in professional activity oriented courses can be enhanced.

#### **9.2.4 Theoretical Learning**

It was found that the participants had difficulty in applying the knowledge learnt in the theoretical modules. In the design of these modules, approaches to instruction should include helping pre-service PE teachers to transfer disciplinary knowledge into practical and experiential knowledge needed for their future teaching. It is recommended that more contextual examples should be used to illustrate how the theories can be applied. To encourage critical reflection, a dialectical environment needs to be constructed for PE learning. Within such an environment, pre-service PE teachers’ views on their professional learning from the theoretical knowledge can be examined, exchanged and debated so as to allow for the meaningful exchange of viewpoints and honest investigation of the associated values. Opportunities should also be provided for pre-service PE teachers to critically appraise and challenge their preconceptions. Such an environment can stimulate them to see the practical uses of those theoretical components in their professional practices.

#### **9.2.5 Contextual Learning**

The pre-service PE teachers in this study articulated a variety of views concerning the purpose of PE for school pupils after being professionally socialised through their teacher education programme. Apparently, the programme is relatively weak in

inculcating clear conceptions of schooling and PE teaching. Thus, pre-service PE teachers need to be provided with more detailed information about the school context from which the current conceptions of the purposes of PE are formed. PE teacher educators should provide opportunities for them to formulate review and refine their vision on PE.

As illustrated in the findings of this study, most of the participants experienced either shock or stress in their first FE when faced with the realities of teaching. The first FE appears to be their critical socialising incident, which may force them to shift their conception of teaching. As a consequence, they change their focus from “professional learning” to the “pedagogical knowledge” of their teacher education programme. As illustrated in the dialogues, the pre-service PE teachers suffered from feelings of insecurity and showed too much concern for “how to survive in the FE”. Under such circumstance, FE may be less effective if its purpose is aimed at providing chances for the pre-service PE teachers to test out their professional learning from the teacher education programme and practise their practical teaching.

It is recommended that pre-service PE teachers should be better prepared for their first FE in order to lessen the reality shock and add to the cushioning effects of the “learning to teach” programme. Measures of progressively familiarizing the pre-service PE teachers with the reality of teaching in their FE school should be initiated. The arrangements for a school attachment before the FE would be a practical measure for helping pre-service PE teachers to familiarize themselves with the context of their FE schools. Such an attachment should be integrated into the teacher education programme. Pre-service teachers may act as observers and teacher assistants once every week or every alternate week in the schools for three or four months before the FE. The tutors and supporting teachers can then begin to act as their mentors and provide and suggest advice throughout the whole process. Thus, pre-service teachers are able to be provided with opportunities for implementing their instructional, managerial, organizational and socials

skills in their microteaching practices with pupils in the real context of schools. Besides, if pre-service teachers can realize what they need for teaching during the period of attachment, they will look for what exactly they have to learn in the teacher education programme. Then they will scan and choose their learning contents from a more informed basis. They will not regard them as irrelevant and impractical. They will have a more positive attitude towards their learning and treasure their practical experience and theoretical knowledge as well.

Due to anxiety during the FEs, the participants were sometimes frustrated and some tended to put the blame for problems on others. Participants were found to adopt a variety of socializing strategies to resolve their dissonances. Their strategies included “finding ways to improve their teaching”, “adopting social adaptive strategies” and “relying on self-defensive mechanisms”. It is recommended that the programme design should include elements for pre-service PE teachers to be made aware of such potential dissonances and be prepared adequately with a variety of coping strategies. They should be acquainted with the skills of improving their teaching, knowledge of those adaptive strategies and understanding of defensive mechanisms relevant to solving their teaching problems in the field. Moreover, they should also be cultivated with critical reflexivity in assessing the causes, actions and consequence concerning their problems and strategies during the PE teacher education programme.

For the recommendation to be implemented, a clearer conceptualisation of the school experience, its curriculum framework in relation to the PE teacher education modules, the roles and functions of the tutors and supporting teachers in the supervisory processes, and the collaboration with the supporting teachers and the pre-service PE teachers is required. The conception of “collaborative partnership” with close collaboration between FE schools and the Institute, and constant dialogues between the tutors and the supporting teachers should be supported but closely monitored. It can be achieved through formulating clear roles and functions for the Institute, the FE schools,

the tutors and supporting teachers concerning the professional support offered to the pre-service PE teachers. Moreover, seminars and sharing sessions should be organised for the tutors and the supporting teachers to cultivate collaboration for supervising pre-service PE teachers' professional learning in the field.

The positive socialisation experience of those participants with an orientation towards apprehensiveness demonstrates the importance of generating a positive environment for the professional learning of pre-service PE teachers in the field. A more careful selection of FE sites is recommended. Such sites should include all aspects of a positive learning environment, including pupils with good discipline who respect student teachers, helpful supporting teachers and encouraging tutors. The above-mentioned recommendations and practices should help to allow the FE to play a more influential and positive role in pre-service PE teachers' professional skills and knowledge acquisition and attitude in adopting a positive teaching.

#### **9.2.6 Guidelines for Supporting Teachers**

Another observation of this study is that the participants were dissatisfied with the role played by their supporting teachers. They had concerns with the mentorship provided in support of their professional learning especially in the second FE. Mentoring by the supporting teachers is required during both of the FEs. Collaboration with an involvement of the supporting teachers would increase the likelihood of facilitating the pre-service PE teachers to progress from the examination of their own understanding of the theoretical knowledge introduced in the programme to developing teaching competence. Although their practical knowledge of the supporting teachers should be respected and regarded as of equal importance to the professional knowledge advocated by the Institute, opportunities should be provided for pre-service PE teachers to equip themselves with the skills and habits of asking critical questions about both kinds of knowledge. Eventually, pre-service PE teachers should be able to build up their own professional knowledge.

Being able to reflect upon one's own teaching and educational practices would help to promote the development of professional identity and socialisation into the profession. Thus, it is recommended to incorporate and commit the supporting teachers as far as possible to provide professional support to pre-service PE teachers during their FE.

The pre-service PE teachers experienced or expected various kinds of professional support provided by the supporting teachers. These positive mentorship actions expected by the pre-service PE teachers will serve a useful mentorship guide for supporting teachers in the FEs. It is recommended that a mentorship guide for supporting teachers from the perspective of the pre-service PE teachers should be formulated. They should include the following actions:

- demonstrating a responsible attitude;
- making frequent contact available;
- respecting the pre-service PE teachers' teaching;
- providing demonstration for modelling;
- sharing teaching experiences,
- providing feedbacks on the lessons observed;
- providing professional advice;
- suggesting constructive strategies for solving their teaching problems;
- reserving the facility; and
- helping pre-service PE teachers to handle misbehaving pupils.

#### **9.2.7 Guidelines for the Tutors**

The pre-service PE teachers made positive and negative comments on their tutors' professional support in FEs. The comments are concerned with the modes, purposes and number of teaching supervisions. These should be taken seriously for the review the supervision practices. The purposes of the FEs should be shifted from assessing their

teaching performance to promoting their professional learning in the field. Accordingly, their tutors are expected to play the role of mentors and facilitators instead of assessors and gatekeepers. There should be at least two supervisory visits for each FE so that the pre-service PE teachers can be supported closely during the FE.

The pre-service PE teachers expect various kinds of professional support from their tutors. The list of professional support expected by the pre-service PE teachers serves as a good reference for developing working examples for the tutors when conducting FE supervision. It is recommended that working examples for tutors should be formulated. They should include the following mentorship actions as illustrated from the expectations of the pre-service PE teachers:

- possessing caring and encouraging attitude;
- being understanding and offering comfort;
- providing specific and constructive feedbacks in monitoring their progress;
- providing systematic support for their improvement;
- adopting the mode of supervision behaviour for helping them to analyse problems;
- offering concrete examples for follow-up action instead of only pinpointing weaknesses;
- suggesting interesting teaching activities;
- giving advice on managing the class; and
- providing information on how to deal with trouble-makers and safety precautions for using apparatus.

### **9.3 Recommendations for further research**

This study provides some understanding of the pre-service PE teachers and their occupational socialisation processes in Hong Kong. Based on the findings made in the study, the following areas of future inquiry are recommended:



### **9.3.1 Comparative studies**

The findings of this study are only an exploratory investigation of the understanding of pre-service PE teachers and the development of their teacher perspectives in the terms of their orientations, dispositions, professional conceptions, socialisation strategies and agents in their pre-service socialisation. The use of the above socialisation constructs as reflective devices is found to be illuminative. They are neither inclusive nor exhaustive in terms of the types and the scope of teacher perspectives. Other constructs such as the socialising events, socialising experiences, pre-training personality and psychological attributes are worth further investigation. Comparative studies of these socialising constructs for the ongoing search of the understanding of the pre-service PE teachers and their teacher perspectives with the same design and research questions may be initiated. In so doing a full understanding of “who the pre-service PE teachers joining the PE teacher education programme are” and “how they socialise occupationally” can be illuminated.

### **9.3.2 Organisational socialisation of the pre-service PE teachers**

The exploratory nature of this study has informed the teacher perspectives of different groups of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong. As in the case of most exploratory studies, findings raise more questions than they provide answers. What kind of changes in teacher perspectives of the pre-service PE teachers take place when they move into the professional arena during the induction years? How do each group socialise when they join the world of work in teaching? How do their teacher perspectives continue to develop when they encounter bureaucratic working environments in schools? These are some of the many questions worth further investigation. The information generated provides a better understanding of the organisational socialisation of PE teachers' in Hong Kong. The insights generated facilitate PE teachers' socialisation into their work. In

return, the findings may provide clues on how the pre-service socialisation experience of PE teachers can be incorporated according to the needs of the work place. The findings directly and indirectly promote the professional growth and development of PE teachers.

### **9.3.3 Research Design and Approaches**

The means of data collection in this study only involved interviewing and writing of reflective journals. Verbal and written reports of the participants are the major sources for generating meanings. Such methods of data collection rely much on the participants' awareness of their life experiences and capability of recalling memories. Other means of data collection such as participant observation should also be considered so that the world of the participants can be detected in full. Such a method requires the researcher to observe and record incidents, actions, statements and interactions that the participants are actually engaging in their daily life experience. This may produce more authentic data concerning the socialisation experiences of pre-service PE teachers.

### **9.3.4 Research on the school PE curriculum**

There are concerns raised by most of the male participants over the dance curriculum. On the other hand, the secondary school PE curriculum is being dominated by sports activities. There are problems of discipline and low motivation of pupils in PE learning. The diverse conceptions concerning the purposes and goals of PE perceived by the pre-service PE teachers seem to be problematic. Without the common shared visions on "how" and "what" PE can contribute to the pupils' education, it will be difficult to justify the role, status and existence of the subject as well as the PE teachers in the school curriculum. All these suggest the urgent need to look deeply into the realities of PE teaching and the secondary school PE in Hong Kong. The pre-service teachers in this study inform us that they lack a clear professional conception concerning the purposes of PE for school pupils. In this regard, the school PE and PE teacher education

programme need to be better linked. It would be of worth to investigate this in future studies.

#### **9.4 Conclusion: Pre-service PE Teachers and their Teacher Perspectives**

In this study the variety of teacher perspectives of five groups of pre-service teachers were investigated. Areas explored included orientations, dispositions, professional conceptions, socialising strategies, agents and the powerful impacts. The findings will make a contribution to an understanding of who the pre-service PE teachers were and how they were shaped to become PE teachers through the programme offered in the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Based on the findings, discussions and recommendations, the followings are some concluding remarks:

- 1 Pre-service PE teachers should be made aware of their own teacher perspectives including the orientations and dispositions. They have to be made conscious of anticipated problems and dynamics resulting from such teacher perspectives in their pre-service socialisation processes at the very beginning of the teacher education programme. A better understanding of their own orientations and dispositions facilitates their reflexivity and receptivity to the training provisions provided.
- 2 The findings illustrate that pre-service PE teachers' pre-training teacher perspectives are influential on pre-service PE teachers' professional learning in the PE teacher education programme. In seeking to influence their teacher perspectives, teacher educators should pay particular attention to the value and power of the teacher perspectives that the pre-service PE teachers have brought to their programme.
- 3 The positive socialisation of those pre-service PE teachers with orientations towards teaching affinity illustrates the importance of the sense of commitment and mission. The admission system of the Hong Kong Institute of Education should be reviewed and revised in such a way that more candidates with a strong sense of mission on education

can be recruited into the PE teacher education programme.

4 Pre-service PE teachers should be infused with the commitment, vision and mission to PE teaching. Opportunities in the teacher education programme should be provided for them to learn and realize that teaching itself is not just a job but something that demands total commitment. They have to be convinced that PE teaching is a life long process regardless of what initial reasons they give for their career choice. They should also be helped to examine their past experiences with PE and be made aware of how they have shaped their current beliefs about PE teaching.

5 Teacher education planners and teacher educators may make use of the knowledge of teacher perspectives and occupational socialisation processes identified in this study for the design and evaluation of PE teacher education programme so as to facilitate the pre-service PE teachers' desirable professional growth.

6 Teacher educators should understand the complexities of the pre-service PE teachers and their socialisation processes. They should continuously reflect critically on their practices and the consequences of their actions. They have to foster better interactions with their pre-service PE teachers throughout the education programme. Sharing through meaningful exchange of viewpoints and honest investigation of underlying values can foster an atmosphere of a trustful relationship. Such an atmosphere would be supportive for the pre-service PE teachers to develop helpful teacher perspectives.

7 The diverse and dynamic pre-service occupational socialisation development of pre-service PE teachers was the result of their early socialisation as sport apprentices and observations made during their school days. Accordingly, emphasis should be placed on developing the pre-service PE teachers' orientation, skills and habit of critical inquiry on purposes and consequences of their work. As pre-service PE teachers are active agents in their learning-to-teach processes, they can control and change both the actions and the constraints if they are equipped with the skills and inclination to reflect on the purpose and consequences of their actions, particularly in areas such as effects of their actions

upon pupils, school and the constraints of realities.

On the whole, a concerted effort by teacher educators, researchers and practitioners in the PE field to understand the teacher perspectives from which pre-service PE teachers operate should be made. It is only through such an effort that a more enlightened PE teacher education programme can be designed for pre-service PE teachers' effective professional learning. In fact, what we need is the provision of more contextual relevant preparation experience for our future pre-service PE teachers. Ultimately, they can progress to become well informed and competent PE teachers.

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**Appendix 1: Table showing physical education content of the two-year full-time teacher education programme organised by the Hong Kong Institute of Education**

<b>Domains</b>	<b>Module Titles</b>	<b>Weighting (Credit Points)</b>
Curriculum Studies	Teaching of PE	1
	Motor Learning	1
	Curriculum Studies in PE	1
	PE Administration in Secondary School	1
	PE Evaluation for Secondary School PE	1
	Foundations and Principles of PE	1
Academic Studies	Skill Proficiency 1: A choice of four core physical activities	3
		2
	Skill Proficiency 2: A choice of three core physical activities	2
	Skill Proficiency 3: A choice of three core physical activities	1
	Basic Anatomy and Physiology	

Note: Each credit point is equivalent to 15 hours of guided instruction or directed studies.

## **Appendix 2: A sample of PETE curriculum of the 70s**

### **Information extracted from Northcote College of Education (1970) Bulletin.**

#### Physical Education - Double Elective

The training comprises a two-year course during which training is given in the following techniques:

##### Primary PE Course:

Basic anatomy and physiology, class organisation and management, planning the content of the lesson, the child at various ages and physical levels and its needs, emotional and physical, basic games' patterns and playground markings, the theory of minor games, educational gymnastics, PE Syllabus for Primary Schools, practical and competitive games and sports.

##### Secondary PE Course:

More advanced anatomy and physiology, the theory and practice of major games, science of movement (elementary), agility work, theory and practice of athletics, elementary statistics, evaluation of measurement in PE, modern methods of athletic and games training, practical teaching and observation of lessons, recreational and competitive games practice.

##### Recreation:

All students are expected to play games for practice and may be in representative college teams in the Post-Secondary Colleges Leagues. Facilities are offered for students to take the First Aid examination of the St. John's Ambulance Brigade and the examination of the Royal Life Saving Society. Outdoor training courses in canoeing and camping are organised during the two-year course.

**Appendix 3: Table illustrating the competitive sports dominating as common core activities in the secondary school PE syllabus the 1970s and 1980s**

(Table extracted from Curriculum Development Committee, 1975, 1980, 1988)

**SUGGESTED AREAS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION SYLLABUS FOR SECONADRY SCHOOLS**

Area	Range of Activities	Range of Activities
	Common Core (Activities strongly recommended to be included in the PE programme)	Highly Desirable (Activities to be either included in the PE programme or organised as club or extra-curricular activities)
Athletics	Basic Techniques in (i) Running (ii) Jumping events (iii) Throwing events	Cross Country Run
Dance	Western Folk Dance Modern Educational Dance	Oriental Dance Social Dance
Gymnastics	Basic Gymnastics Educational Gymnastics	Olympic Gymnastics Rhythmic Gymnastics Rebound Tumbling
Aquatic Sports	Basic Swimming Strokes and Water Safety	Life Saving and Survival Swimming Canoeing Rowing Sailing Synchronised Swimming
Team Games	Basketball Football Volleyball Handball	Hockey Softball Netball Rugby
Individual Games	Table-tennis Badminton	Tennis
Other Activities	Circuit Training	Fitness Training Outdoor Activities

#### **Appendix 4: A sample of the PETE programme in the 80s**

(Information quoted from Northcote College of Education,  
Course Handbook 1983-84)

##### Physical Education

Introduction to Physical Education; Aims and Objectives of Physical Education; Principles and Philosophy of Physical Education; Physical Education Lesson Constructions; Physical Education Teaching Methods; Organisation and Administration of Physical Education in Schools; Theory and Practice in (i) Major and Minor games, (ii) Athletics, (iii) Swimming, (iv) Gymnastics, (v) Folk Dancing, (vi) Modern Educational Dance, (vii) Fitness Training, (viii) Outdoor Education and Recreation, (ix) First Aid. Sciences in Physical Education including simple Anatomy and Physiology; applied Anatomy and Kinesiology; Physiology and Exercise; Tests and Measurements.

The Course also includes (a) Visits to Schools, Rehabilitation Centres, Youth Centres, Outdoor Training Camps etc.; (b) Observation and Demonstration Lessons, (c) Practical Teaching in both the primary and secondary schools and (d) Field work in organising and officiating in local sports meets.



**Appendix 5: Table showing the number of articles presented according to their categories published in the Journal of Physical & Recreation (Hong Kong)**

Editions/ Yr.,Vol. (issue)	Physical Fitness	Sch ool PE	Exer cise Science	Recrea tion	Teacher Evalua tion	PE TE	PE Teach ing	Sports
1995,1(1)								3
1995,1(2)	2		2	1				2
1996,2(1)		2	1(1qn)	1				1
1996,2(1)	2(1qn)			1		1	1	2
1997,3(1)	2(1qn)		5(4qn)				1	1(1qn)
1997,3(2)	2(1qn)		1	2				1
1998,4(1)	1(1qn)	1(ql)	2(2qn)	3(1qn)	2(2qn)		2	
1998,4(2)	1(1qn)	1(qn)	4 (3qn)	2 (1qn)				
1999,5(1)			3(1qn)	4	1(ql)			
1999,5(2)	3 (1 qn)	2	2(2 qn)	1		1	1	
2000,6(1)	1 (1 qn)	1	3 (3 qn)	1				
2000,6(2)	1 (1 qn)	3	1 (1 qn)			1 (1qn)	1 (1 qn)	
2001,7(1)	3 (1 qn)		2 (2 qn)				1 (1 ql)	3 (2qn)
2001,7(2)	3 (2 qn)	2(2qn )	3(2(qn)			1 (1qn)		2(2qn)
2002,8, (1)	1 (1 qn)	1(1qn )	1(1qn)		1	1	1 (1qn)	2
2002,8(2)	2 (2 qn)	2 (2qn)	3 (2qn)			1 (1ql)		2(1qn)
editions (112 articles)	24 (14 qn)	15 (6 qn, 1ql)	33 (24 qn)	16 (2 qn)	4 (2 qn) (1 ql)	5 (2qn) 1(1ql )	8 (2qn) (1ql)	19 (7qn)

Total number of articles (112), (q n)- Quantitative studies-(59) ; (ql)-Qualitative studies-(4)

**Appendix 6: Table showing the characteristics of the sample of the Pilot Study**

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Genders</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Accommodations and Residential Areas</b>	<b>Level of Sports Skill Proficiency</b>
Chan	Female	19	Hong Kong Island	Weak
Kwok	Male	21	Kowloon Peninsula	Average
Lai	Male	19	Kowloon Peninsula	Average
Lee	Male	22	Hong Kong Island	Weak
Mah	Female	22	New Territories	Average
Mak	Male	19	New Territories	Average
Poon	Male	19	New Territories	Average
Pui	Male	20	Kowloon Peninsula	Weak
Tsui	Female	21	New Territories	Good
Yau	Male	20	Kowloon Peninsula	Good

(The ratio of the residential areas of the sample PE recruits- Hong Kong Island: Kowloon Peninsula: New Territories=2:4:4. The ratio of their sports skill proficiency level- good: average: weak=2:5:3)

## **Appendix 7: The Consent Form**

**Institute of Education  
University of London  
Research Degree in Education**

### **From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong**

Dear Mr./ Ms.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this project. Your participation is very much appreciated. There will be an interview whenever you are available. It will last for about 30 to 45 minutes. You are also required to fill in a reflective journal. Just before the start of the project, I would like to assure you that as a participant in this project, you have several very definite **rights**.

**Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary.**

**You are free to refuse to answer any questions at any time.**

**You are free to withdraw from the project at any time.**

The information obtained in this project will be kept strictly confidential and used solely for research purpose. Under no circumstances will your name or identifiable characteristics be included in the report.

I would be grateful if you would sign this form to show that I have read you its contents.

----- Signature

----- Name in full

----- Date

**Chung Li**  
Research Student

## **Appendix 8: An Interview Guide for the Pilot Study**

### **From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong-The Pilot Study**

- 1 To explore participants' concrete experiences gained from the FE including:
  - 1.1 Successful and unsuccessful experiences
  - 1.2 Happy and unhappy experience
- 2 To identify the major differences in expectations on the important stakeholders in school during the FE
  - 2.1 The pupils
  - 2.2 The FE school
  - 2.3 The tutors
  - 2.4 The participants themselves
- 3 To understand their difficulties encountered during the FE
- 4 To investigate the types of professional support that the participants received from:
  - 4.1 The tutors
  - 4.2 The Institute
  - 4.3 The supporting teachers
  - 4.4 The FE schools
  - 4.5 Others
- 6 To learn about the participants' recognition of the functions and value of the FE.
- 7 To find out how much the participants had learnt from the FE experience
- 8 To examine the participants' identification of their own strengths and weaknesses
- 9 To look for their clues to the identity of a PE teacher
- 10 To talk about their future plans

## **Appendix 9: A Sample of the Reflective Journal for the Pilot Study**

### **From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong-The Pilot Study**

#### **Reflective Journal**

Name :

**Please recall the experience from your last FE and reflect on the following issues:**

- 1 Write about some of your concrete experiences gained from the FE including:  
i/ successful and unsuccessful, and /or ii/ happy and unhappy experiences.
- 2/ What were your expectations on the pupils/ schools/ tutors/yourself?
- 3/ What were the major difficulties that you had encountered?
- 4/ What kinds of support did you receive from the Tutors/ the Institute/ the Supporting teachers/ the FE schools and/or others?
- 5/ What were the Values and Functions of the FE?
- 6/ What is your opinion of the arrangement of the PE programme in meeting the needs of your last FE?
- 7/ What had you learnt from your last FE?
- 8/ Can you identify your strengths and weaknesses from the last FE?
- 9/ What are the qualities of being a good PE teacher?

10/ What are your future needs?

11/ Is there anything concerning the FE that you would like to talk about?

**Thank Your Very Much!**

Chung Li

Research Student

## **Appendix 10: A summary Report of findings of the Pilot Study**

### **From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong**

#### **A summary report of the findings of the pilot study**

The pilot study was conducted in July 1996 and completed in January 1997. It aimed at going through the whole process including planning, communicating, negotiating entry and establishing contracts with the target students. Other purposes were to familiarise with interviewing and reflective journal techniques and the skills of transcribing and coding.

A sample of 10 pre-service PE teachers, who had just completed the first field experience of teaching PE in schools, were invited to the pilot study. The target sample included 7 males and 3 females with the age between 19 and 22. Careful consideration was given to the ratio of age, gender, levels of skill proficiency distribution of the pre-service PE teachers enrolled in the PETE course and they were found to be appropriate and representative.

Interviewing and reflective journal were chosen as instruments for data collection. Each participant was then arranged to have a taped and semi-structured interview in the tutor's office at his or her convenience. Before the interview, a reflective journal was delivered to each of them. They could work out the journals in their own time

The pilot study intended to investigate how 10 participants constructed their meanings on their first field experience and how they perceived the values and functions of such experience. They were asked to assess the effectiveness of the PETE programme for preparing them to teach PE in schools. The dynamics of the teaching triads and the process of participants' learning to teach were also dealt with. The following is the major findings generated from the pilot study.

## **1 The value and functions of the Teaching Practice**

A variety of insights were gained from the pilot study. Most of the participants valued positively the significant contribution of the teaching experience. They understood the actual work of the PE teachers and knew whether they were suitable for the job or not. They identified their strengths and weaknesses after putting the theories that they had learnt into practice. They treasured such an experience and initiated their future plans for improvement.

The results of the pilot study supported the findings of some similar studies (Zeichner 1980, Pease 1884, Cartner-Smith 1996). Teaching practice experience was viewed by the participants in this study as an important means of socialisation into the profession. They were allowed to perform the practical work of PE teachers.

## **2 The teaching triads: the supporting teacher, the tutors and the participants**

The significant roles and responsibilities of the supporting teachers and the supervisors were confirmed in this study. Some participants said that they had received valuable advice and positive suggestions from their tutors, but some complained that they had not been given enough support as expected.

Most of the participants found that the supporting teachers were helpful for they had given them information about the school, the equipment and the pupils. Some even gave them feedback about the technical skills of teaching regularly and helped them analyse teaching critically. They expressed that they were benefited a lot if the supporting teachers could share their knowledge, enthusiasm, care and love for the pupils with them because they were an immediate source of help for the participants during the teaching practice.



### **3 The Process of learning to teach during teaching practice: a speculation**

It was found that most participants had their own teaching styles. These styles were greatly influenced by past experiences such as their experiences in their secondary schools and the PETE programmes. They made slight changes when interacting with the teaching practice schools, the pupils, the supporting teachers, their peer student teachers and their tutors during their teaching practice.

The participants usually made lots of effort on presenting themselves to the pupils as PE teachers. They very often intended to show off their skills and knowledge. Some of them admitted that they were worried about doing demonstrations and afraid that they did not have adequate knowledge for teaching PE. They were searching for their identity at the early stage. They tried to show their pupils that they could be friendly, enthusiastic but firm. This signified a stage of working towards pupils' acceptance.

It was not surprising to learn that the participants tried to maintain good relationship with their pupils for most of them showed much concern on the discipline problems. They did a lot of work after school by talking to the pupils, joining their activities and remembering their names. In so doing, they hoped that a good relationship could facilitate good discipline in class. In most participants' mind, the lesson could not be implemented successfully as planned only after gaining the acceptance of their pupils. Some of them expressed that they were able to adapt the content to the interests of the pupils when they had a better understanding of them. They related most of their successful experiences with their good relationship with the pupils and the accomplishment of the task (successful implementation of the lesson). Some of the participants tried to concern more on the outcome of the teaching content. Others focused more on the learning outcomes of the pupils. All these strategies adopted by the participants demonstrated the active agency of the participants in dealing with their dynamic teaching situations.

The development of the participants seems socialised in distinctive ways. The

participants in this pilot study started with gaining an acceptance of the pupils. After gaining the acceptance of the pupils, they tried to implement their PE lessons as planned. More attention would then be played on the content implementation and the learning outcomes of the pupils. They appeared to progress back or forth these stages depending on the discipline of the pupils. The above is a speculation only and a thorough study has to be initiated before it can be established.

#### **4 The PETE**

The participants valued the knowledge in forms of sports skill proficiency of their PETE programme. It equipped them with the content knowledge for teaching the subject. Some also identified the managerial skills acquired from the peer teaching content of the PETE programme as useful. Through such experience, they were more capable of creating positive relationship with the pupils. Moreover, some of them tended to recall their learning experience in their secondary schools and transfer it to their teaching. It signifies the kind of impact that the biographies have had on the participants. These experiences have to be aware by the teacher educators and merged into the PETE programme.

However, some of the participants complained that the PETE programme was too short and impractical. It illustrates the kind of “programmatic dilemma” and “idealism and realism” dissonance as suggested by Applegate (1985) and Alverman (1981). One of them even thought that the training courses organised by the other sports associations were more useful than the PETE programme. As a matter of fact, it would be quite impossible for any programme to prepare fully the student teachers for teaching within half a year. There should be an evaluation of the PETE regarding to its intention, content and delivery if it is geared towards helping pre-service teachers for the teaching practice.

## 5 Conclusion

Through the pilot study, the whole process from planning, communicating and establishing contracts for the interview had been gone through. A sharing session was conducted with the participants for evaluating the pilot study. To a certain degree, the necessary interviewing skills were familiarised. Several points have to be remembered. The schedules of having the interviews should be well planned. There should not be more than three interviews a day for the interviewer would be tired and bored. The matter of role conflict – as a tutor and a researcher had to be aware so that focus should be solely on asking questions rather than offering solutions or comments. The tutor's office was obviously not an ideal place for having the interview. Maybe, a comfortable room and a can of soft drink can create a warm atmosphere. The up-keeping of the confidentiality, the explanation of the purpose of the interview and cassette recording at the beginning were important for establishing trust in the interviews. Although the process was exhaustive, the data generated from preliminary transcription conveyed fruitful meanings. Nevertheless, the experience gained from the pilot study was valuable. It enabled the researcher to go a little bit deeper into the hidden meaning of the student teachers. It was probably the virtues of the interpretive approach. It was through such an approach that the student teachers' voice could be heard.

**Appendix 11: Table showing selected characteristics of the sample of the main study**

Name	Gender	Age	Living Location /Types of accommodation	Sports Skill Proficiency
Sim	Female	19	New Territories	Average
Chan	Male	20	New Territories	Weak
Shing	Male	21	New Territories	Average
Leung	Male	20	New Territories	Good
Fai	Male	19	New Territories	Good
Kuen	Male	19	New Territories	Weak
Tung	Male	22	Kowloon Peninsular	Average
Kin	Male	23	Kowloon Peninsular	Average
Man	Male	19	Kowloon Peninsular	Weak
Chung	Male	22	Kowloon Peninsular	Good
Yan	Female	18	Kowloon Peninsular	Average
Lung	Male	20	Kowloon Peninsular	Average
To	Male	20	Hong Kong Island	Good
Kai	Male	22	Hong Kong Island	Average
Hang	Male	20	Hong Kong Island	Average
Siu	Female	19	Hong Kong Island	Average
Ho	Male	21	Hong Kong Island	Average
Hung	Female	20	Hong Kong Island	Weak
Kwan	Male	21	Hong Kong Island	Weak
Lai	Female	19	Hong Kong Island	Good

(The distribution ratio of PE recruits' residential areas- Hong Kong Island: Kowloon Peninsula:

New Territories=8:6:6 and the skill proficiency – good: average: weak = 6:10:4)

## **Appendix 12: The Sample of the Reflective Journal of Phase One**

Institute of Education University of London

Research Degree in Education

### **From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong Reflective Journal (Phase One)**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

1 Why do you want to become a PE teacher?

2 What do you think the characteristics of a PE teacher are?

3 Recall from the experience concerning PE in your school days and reflect on the following issues:

i Successful, Satisfying or happy Incident(s)

ii Unsuccessful, unpleasant, unsatisfied or unhappy incident(s)

4 What is PE?

5 What are your expectations from:

i/ the PE courses?

ii/ the PE Lecturers

iii/ yourself

iv/ others

6 To be a PE Teacher, what do you think your strengths and weaknesses are?

Thank You Very Much

Chung Li,  
Research Student

## **Appendix 13: The Interview Guide - Phase One**

Institute of Education  
University of London  
Research Degree in Education

### **Research Project: From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong Interview (Phase One)**

To explore the participants' career choice:

- Why do you want to become a PE teacher?
- Did your PE teachers have great influence on you?
- Who influenced you most when you decided to take PE as your elective subject?

To learn about the participants' PE related involvement and conceptions:

- Which sport are you particularly good at?
- Did you have any unforgettable experience concerning PE during your secondary school?
- What about some happy ones?

To understand the participants' perceptions on the PE teacher:

- What are the characteristics of a good PE teacher?
- What is PE?
- Are there any special qualities to be a PE teacher?

To talk about the participants' self appraisal on confidence, strengths and weaknesses to become PE teachers:

- What do you think about yourself?
- How can you improve yourself?
- How often do you train yourself?

To examine the participants' expectations on their teacher training:

- What do you think about your tutors?
- What do you think about the courses here?
- What do you expect to teach your pupils?
- What is your expectation from yourself?

Chung Li  
Research Student

**Appendix 14: Table showing the summary of participant' responses concerning their perceived characteristics of "good PE teachers"**

<i><b>Cases (Participants with orientations towards</b></i>	<i><b>Skill/ Know-ledge</b></i>	<i><b>Instructional Competence/ Interpersonal interaction capability</b></i>	<i><b>Personal attributes</b></i>	<i><b>Wisdom of Teaching</b></i>	<i><b>Others</b></i>
Chung (Coaching)	Skilful in sports	Organising ability	Fit, Strong, Active , Confident, Energetic, Never retreat, Loud voice, Influential		
To (Coaching)	Skilful in sports		Fit, Strong, Active , Sporty type, Confident, Kind to students, Appearance		
Lai (Coaching)	Good skill and knowledge in sports	Understand pupils Good relationship, Communicative		Educating students how to play and behave, Not to think of salary only	Liked my coach, Interested in sports
Tung (Pragmatic considerations)	Skilful in sports	Keen on communicating with colleagues and pupils, Know how to communicate, Understanding pupils			
Hang (Pragmatic considerations)	Skilful in all sort of sports, having good knowledge in PE	Get along well with pupils	Nice character		
Hung (Pragmatic considerations)	Skilful and good knowledge of PE	Good relationship with pupils and other teachers, Capable of teaching different things to pupils	Friendly, Enthusiastic in teaching		Good Language ability
Kwan (Pragmatic considerations)	Good knowledge and skilful of sports	Getting along well with others	Enthusiastic in teaching		
Sim (Teaching affinity)	Skilful and good at sports & in PE Knowledge	Good relationship with pupils, Understanding pupils	Physically fit, Active, Friendly	Developing students' potentiality , Help pupils to keep fit	
Fai (Teaching Affinity)	Skilful and good knowledge in sports	Managing and organising sports activities	Considerate, Caring		
Yan (Teaching affinity)	Have knowledge on every sports		Patient, Enthusiastic, Sacrifice time after school	Willing to teach	Such as my mum



Siu (Teaching Affinity)	Skilful in every sport	Good observation, Willing to work with pupils	Open, Active, Expressive Sense of humour, Keen on teaching, Patient, Confident, Respect and Care pupils	Keen on teaching	Good model
Lung (Teaching affinity)	Knowledge in PE, competent in Sports Skills	Good relationship; Managing everything well in school	Active, Sense of humour; Ready for challenge	Cultivating the carry-over value of physical activities for pupils	
Leung (Teaching affinity)	Skilful & Knowledge able in PE	Techniques in managing class, Good observation and demonstration	Calm	Selecting the best way to contribute to pupils' growth	
Ho (An easy-going style)	Good Knowledge of PE and good at different sports	Knowing how to teach	Patient, Kind, Creative, Friendly like a father, Teach wholeheartedly, Sacrifice time after school		keen on sports
Kin (An easy-going style)	Skilful and have good knowledge in PE	Good relationship with pupils, Knowing how to use facilities	Appearance, Healthy, Tidy, Enthusiastic	Arousing pupils' interests in sports	Trying to improve skills and Knowledge continuously
Kai (An easy-going style)	Adequate knowledge in PE; Skilful enough	Knowing how to teach	Strong, Muscular, Calm, Influential; Charming		
Shing (An easy-going style)	Skill	Acquire instructional techniques	Look like a PE teacher		
Chan (Apprehensiveness)	Skilful in sports	Good relationship with others, Pay attention to small group, Care everyone	Active, Smart	Arousing the interests of his pupils in sports	
Kuen (Apprehensiveness)	Good skills	Thinking of a lot of activities	Voice, Sense of humour		
Man (Apprehensiveness)	Skilful in sports		Fit		

## **Appendix 15: A sample of the interview guide for the Phase Two data collection**

Institute of Education

University of London

Research Degree in Education

### **Research Project: From students to PE teachers- A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong**

#### **Interview (Phase Two)**

To learn about the participants' perception on the teacher education programme:

- Would you like to talk about that courses and modules that you had attended?

To ask for their comments on the PE programme provided, including:

- What do you think about the foundation and principle of PE?
- Which activities did you enjoy most? -What have you learnt from it?
- What about Professional Activity like Basketball? -Which activities did you enjoy most? What have you learnt from it?
- What about folk dance'? Which activities did you enjoy most? What have you learnt from it?
- What about curriculum studies? Which activities did you enjoy most? What have you learnt from it?
- How about Volleyball? Which activities did you enjoy most? What have you learnt from it?
- How about Gymnastics? Which activities did you enjoy most? What have you learnt from it?
- What about athletics? Which activities did you enjoy most? What have you learnt from it?
- Do you find the programme conducted in the institute useful?

To explore the participants' preferred learning modes:

- Which courses interested you most? Why?
- Which teaching and learning activities interested you most?
- If you have to attend the course again, what kinds of improvement would you like to see?

To talk about the participants' strengths and weaknesses of being a PE teacher:

- What were the difficulties found during attending the course?
- What were your strengths?
- What were your weaknesses?
- What are your future needs?

To understand the participants' professional conceptions on the purposes of PE and the competence required by a PE teacher:

- Would you please identify the purposes of PE for pupils?
- What kinds of competences are important for PE teaching?

LI Chung, Research Student

## **Appendix 16: A Sample of the reflective journal of the phase two data collection**

Institute of Education  
University of London

Research Degree in Education

### **From students to teachers-A longitudinal study of the occupational socialisation of pre-service PE teachers in Hong Kong Reflective Journal (Phase Two)**

1. Recall from the modules that you had attended in the past few months, identify and briefly describe some topics that interested you most and state the reasons.

i. Teaching of PE

ii. Foundation and Principles of PE

iii. Basketball

iv. Western Folk dance

Curriculum Studies in PE

v. Volleyball

vii. Gymnastics

xiii. Athletics

10. What are your expectations from the PE courses?

**Thank You Very Much**

LI Chung

Research Student

## **Appendix 17: A review of participants' perceptions on their practical and theoretical modules respectively in the professional orientation phase**

### **The professional Activity-oriented Modules**

There are good reasons for including skill proficiency activities such as “western folk dance”, “basketball”, “athletics”, and “gymnastics” in the school PE curriculum. Western folk dance is thought to be more capable of developing pupils' sensitivity to the beauty of human movements and thus it is included as a core programme in the school PE curriculum. Basketball is a popular sport and a basketball court is the common facility in most local schools. The game, which requires participants to play in teams, is regarded as a life-time sport and has the capability of cultivating pupils' team spirit and social values. Athletics has long been regarded as a traditional sports event for improving bodily strength, power, speed and flexibility. It trains pupils to run faster, throw farther and jump higher. The annual school athletics meet is usually the most important sports events in all primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. Gymnastics is one of the core programmes because it is geared towards training pupils to have full control of their body, including locomotive and non-locomotive skills on the floor or with apparatus. They contribute to the all-round development of the pupils.

#### **Dance**

Concerning the dance unit, most of the participants stated that they had been introduced to a lot of practical experience-derived knowledge in the form of mastery of dance skills. They acknowledged that they had improved in their aesthetic sense while dancing. Besides, two participants claimed that they had acquired the theoretical knowledge such as “the characteristics, the culture, the custom and the development” of different dances in different countries from reference books and teaching notes. The participants also experienced the pedagogical knowledge and skills such as selecting “teaching progression” and “writing a lesson plan” for dance instruction. They expressed that they had many opportunities to apply the knowledge in their teaching. Most of the

participants' remarks illustrated their significant professional learning acquired from the dance unit. The socialising impacts of the unit on the participants are significantly substantial.

### **Basketball**

In the teaching unit of basketball, the participants reported that they had acquired practical knowledge of the basic techniques, some game tactics and some interesting stretching exercises for warm-up. They were also provided with opportunities to experience some pedagogical knowledge such as teaching methods, progressive stages and utilisation of the facilities. Three participants claimed that they had learnt some terminology.

Cross case analysis identified that the participants with orientations towards teaching affinity, apprehensiveness and an easy-going style acquired their professional knowledge from the unit of basketball. However, those with orientations towards coaching and pragmatic considerations were critical and claimed that they had learnt little from the unit. It seems that the tutors had not catered for the individual differences when implementing the teaching plans. Since there was a range of ability in the skill proficiency of the participants, the top players would find the teaching content too easy and the beginners would think that their learning was impractical. Therefore, at the end of the teaching unit, it is not surprising to see some unfavourable remarks including "too many theories", "inadequate time for practice", "elementary content level", "impractical and uninteresting activities" and "low skill proficiency level of the tutor".

### **Gymnastics**

Gymnastics is a teaching unit positively perceived by the participants. In most participants' mind, it was systemically organised and practically conducted. They had many opportunities to practise their gymnastic skills and combine different movements into sequences. Through practising, they experienced the mastery of gymnastics skills including some difficult ones. There were pedagogical components such as selection of

suitable contents and progressive stages for teaching. All participants claimed that they were introduced to the safety precautions and practised spotting techniques that they perceived as important elements of teaching the gymnastics in school. This illustrates another “associative” and “interpretive” mode of knowledge use apart from introducing the pedagogical skills and assuming the application of the content knowledge to practical teaching. Most participants found the content useful and acceptable in enriching their professional knowledge. The socialising impacts of the teaching unit of gymnastics are significant, in accordance with the participants’ expectation.

### **Athletics**

Conversely to the above, most of the participants had reservations about the professional knowledge that they had experienced from the athletics unit. The teaching content only included practical knowledge of basic skills in athletics such as start, sprint, hurdling, high jump and some interesting introductory activities. The throwing events of shot putt and javelin were not included. Unfavourable remarks relating to “the limited scope” and “superficial level of the content” frequently appeared in the participants’ reflective journals. The participants were not satisfied with the presentations which were not well organised. They disliked the lengthy instructions and lack of practice. The mode of teaching adopted by the tutor was mainly “replicative” practice on simple athletic skills. The sessions were “self-oriented” as described by one participant, meaning that participants were left to practise and learn on their own. More important, most of the participants felt that they had not acquired “the skills and knowledge of the event”, “the know-how of the pedagogy” and “the positive values experienced through being involved in it”. They perceived all these causes as being important in their professional learning.

### **The Theoretical Modules**

The three theoretical modules, “Foundation and Principles of PE”, “Teaching of PE” and “Curriculum Theories in PE” are mainly “propositional knowledge”. They provided discipline-based theories for the participants. They are generalisations and

principles of practices aiming at building strong academic foundations for pre-service PE teachers so that they are able to make rational decisions about their professional actions.

### **Foundation and Principles of PE**

The content of “Foundation and Principles of PE” is primarily disciplinary-based knowledge. It draws on theoretical concepts of other disciplines such as history, sociology and philosophy. A tutor was responsible for the module and the medium of instruction was English. From the interview, most of the participants were found to have difficulties in recalling the course content and notable activities. They could only name the course content in a nitty-gritty manner. The participants complained that it was a difficult subject (Ho, Shing, Yan, Hung). They said that they had learnt very little and they were not very sure about how much they had acquired from the module. Others (Lai, Chung, Kuen, Yan, Kai, Ho and Hang) apparently put doubts about the effectiveness of the modules down to the cause of language, since the module was conducted in English. The nature of the discipline-based concepts being vague and abstract, and the predominant physical and practical oriented preferences of the participants were some of the causes hindering the participants’ professional learning. It gives rise to two issues concerning “the participants’ predominant view of PE as a practical and physical skill-oriented subject” and “the mode of delivering theoretical knowledge” that would be discussed further in Chapter VIII.

### **Teaching of PE**

The module of “Teaching of PE” emphasises pedagogical knowledge. It introduced the participants to theories and concepts about the pedagogy in PE teaching. As revealed in the participants’ interviewing dialogues, theoretical backgrounds of managerial skills such as using of the voice, executing a demonstration, managing the class and conducting rainy day lessons were presented. The tutor incorporated the pedagogical knowledge with theories and principles of teaching and learning through involving each participant in a ten-minute microteaching after completing the theoretical content. It was the intention of the tutor to make use of microteaching as a means of putting theories into practices. Most



of the participants valued this kind of professional learning in the form of experiential teaching. Complimentary remarks like “useful”, “fantastic”, “learned a lot”, “gain lots of valuable information” and “practical” were commonly articulated with their professional learning. However, it is quite astonishing to see that the participants seldom pinpointed the theoretical knowledge concerning respective PE pedagogies.

### **Curriculum Studies in PE**

In the module of “Curriculum Studies in PE”, the participants were acquainted with the knowledge of programme planning, essential curricular theories, curriculum planning and organisation, possible modes of rainy day lessons and progressive teaching activities for various parts of the PE content. Besides, the participants had to participate in “applicative” and “interpretative” modes of professional learning through making use of knowledge in group discussion, designing teaching activities, writing lesson and unit plans. Generally speaking, it was considered to be another successful module as most of the participants acknowledged significant professional learning from it. The practical knowledge in the forms of constructing programme planning was highly complimented. Similar to the module of “Teaching of PE”, the theoretical knowledge such as curriculum theories and models, which are thought to be the foundational knowledge of all curriculum studies were rarely mentioned. It is not clear whether the problem lies on the tutor’s presentation or the selective focus of the participants on the practical aspects of their teacher training.

## **Appendix 18: The detailed explanation of participants' placements and teaching in the first school experience**

Most of the PE participants were arranged to have their FE in subsidised secondary schools near their residential areas and work in teams while Yan and Fai had to teach independently in two government secondary schools respectively. Leung's case was a rare arrangement of the Institute for he had his first school experience alone in a private school. It might be due to the difficulty of the Institute to find adequate FE places in subsidised and government schools. Kwan and Ho were assigned to teach the co-educational classes while others conducted their classes with either boys or girls. All of them planned to teach two to four physical activities in Form One to Three classes. Although the schools were suggested to arrange a minimum of four periods of PE per week for each recruit, the teaching load assigned to each recruit ranged from five to twenty-six lessons. Most of the recruits adopted the multi-activity mode (Metzler 2000) in their teaching. Gymnastics was the most popular content that PE recruits selected to teach in class. It followed by team ball games including basketball, volleyball, football and handball. Some included athletics, dance and fitness in their TP. Their choice of the teaching content coincided with those skill proficiency modules that they had learnt in the first and early second semesters. Obviously, most participants planned to teach in accordance with their familiarity with the subject matter. Other reasons might be related to their speciality, tutors' or supporting teachers' preference and the teaching schedule of the FE school. The levels of the classes, types of the schools, number of PE periods and the teaching content that the recruits involved in their FE was summarised in the following table:

**Appendix 19: Table showing the details of the participants' assignment in the teaching practice**

<b>Cases (participants with orientations towards:)</b>	<b>Class taught</b>	<b>Total no. of PE periods</b>	<b>Teaching content</b>	<b>Types of the TP Schools</b>
Chung (Coaching)	Form 1,2	18	Basketball, Athletics, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary school Band Five
To (Coaching)	Form 1,2	24	Athletics, Gymnastics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary School Band One
Lai (Coaching)	Form 1	12	Dance, Gymnastics, Physical Fitness	Subsidized Secondary School Band Five
Tung (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 1	12	Gymnastics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary School
Hang (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 3	12	Gymnastics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary School
Hung (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 1,2	16	Gymnastics, Volleyball	Subsidized Secondary School
Kwan (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 1,3 Co-Ed. Classes	20	Gymnastics, Football, Athletics, Fitness	Subsidized Secondary School
Sim (Teaching affinity)	Form 3	12	Dance, Volleyball, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary School Band One
Fai (Teaching affinity)	Form 1,2,3	20	Basketball, Football	Government Secondary School
Yan (Teaching affinity)	Form 1, 2	12	Dance, Gymnastics	Government Secondary School
Siu (Teaching affinity)	Form 1	18	Dance, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary School
Lung (Teaching affinity)	Form 1,2,3	18	Gymnastics, Dance, Volleyball	Subsidized Secondary School Band One

affinity)				
Leung (Teaching affinity)	Form 3	5	Basketball	Private Secondary School
Ho (An easy-going style)	Form 2 Co-Ed. Class	12	Basketball, Volleyball, Dance	Subsidized Secondary School
Kin (An easy-going style)	Form 1	12	Football, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary School
Kai (An easy-going style)	Form 1,2	26	Gymnastics, Football, Athletics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary School Band One
Shing (An easy-going style)	Form 1	16	Football, Athletics	Subsidized Secondary School
Chan (Apprehensive ness)	Form 1,3	12	Football, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary School
Kuen (Apprehensive ness)	Form 1,2	14	Football, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary School
Man (Apprehensive ness)	Form 2,3	18	Handball, Athletics	Subsidized Secondary School

Teaching content (no. of participants planned to teach) : Gymnastics (15), Basketball (8), Football (7),

Athletics (6), Dance (6), Volleyball (4), Handball (1), Fitness (2)

Types of the School (no. of participants being arranged to have their FE): Subsidised schools (17), Government schools (2), Private schools (1), Co-Ed. classes (2)

## **Appendix 20: A Sample of the Interview Guide for the Phase Three Data Collection**

University of London

The Institute of Education

### **Research Project: From Students to Physical Education Teachers: A Longitudinal Studies of the Pre-service Physical Education Teachers in Hong Kong**

#### **The Third Phase Study: The First School Experience Phase**

##### **Before the FE**

To explore the feeling and understanding of participants' perceptions on teaching, including:

- How do you feel about the coming FE? Why?
- What are you going to teach?
- What class are you going to teach?
- What do you think the functions of FE are?
- What are you going to achieve during the FE?

To learn about participants' expectations on the FE, including:

- What are the important elements of successful teaching?
- Can you identify your strengths for teaching?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What characteristics do you think a good and successful PE lesson should be?
- Do you think the institute has given you enough support?
- Do you think the FE School has given you enough support?
- What about your supervisor?
- Are there any colleagues teaching with you during the FE?

##### **After the FE**

To find out the actual feeling the participants about FE:

- How do you feel about the FE? Why?

To achieve a better understanding of the participants' experience on FE, including:

- What did you teach?
- Were there any happy and successful/ unhappy and unsuccessful incidents?

To detect the differences in thinking before and after the FE, including:

- What are the functions of FE?
- What did you achieve during the FE?
- What are the important elements of successful teaching?
- Can you identify your strengths for teaching?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What characteristics do you think a good and successful PE lesson should be?

To examine the participants' opinions on the support received, including:

- Do you think the institute has given you enough support?
- Do you think the FE School has given you enough support?
- What do you think about your tutor?
- What was your main problem encountered during the FE?
  - Did you try to imitate your PE teacher in secondary school when you were teaching?
- What did you learn from the FE?

To ask for their comments on the PE programme provided, including:

- Do you find the programme conducted in the institute useful?
- What are your future needs?

## **Appendix 20a: A Sample of the Reflective Journal for the Phase Three Data Collection**

Research Project: From Students to Physical Education Teachers: A Longitudinal Studies of the Pre-service Physical Education Teachers in Hong Kong

The Three Phase Study: The Professional Reorientation Phase (Reflective Journal)

### **(Before the FE)**

1. What do you think about the coming FE?

2. What are the significant functions of the coming FE?

3. What are you going to achieve from the coming FE?

4. What characteristics do you think a good and successful PE teacher should possess?

5. What characteristics do you think successful PE lessons should be?

6. Identify your strengths and weaknesses for the coming FE:

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. What do you expect to get from:

i/ The Institute

ii/ The FE School

**iii/ Your Supervisor**

**iv/ The School Teachers**

**v/ Your Peer Student Teachers**

**8. What are the difficulties that you are going to face during FE?**



## **Appendix 20b: A Sample of the Reflective Journal for the Phase Three Data Collection**

Research Project: From Students to Physical Education Teachers: A Longitudinal Studies  
of the Pre-service Physical Education Teachers in Hong Kong

### **(After the FE)**

1. What do you think about the FE?

2. What are the significant functions of the FE?

3. What have you achieved from the FE?

4. What characteristics do you think a good and successful PE teacher should possess?

5. What characteristics do you think successful PE lessons should be?

6. Identify your strengths and weaknesses after encountering with the FE:

Strengths

Weaknesses

7. What did you get from:

i/ The Institute

ii/ The FE School

iii/ Your Supervisor

iv/ The School Teachers

v/ Your Peer Student Teachers

8. What were the difficulties encountered during the FE?

9 Describe the incident(s) that you had encountered with difficulties, frustration or unhappiness.....

10 How did you deal with it (them)? (Please describe the course of actions)

11 What were the results and consequences?

12 How did you feel?

--

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

LI Chung

Research Student

## **Appendix 21: A brief introduction of the teaching modules included in the second year study (professional reorientation phase)**

The professional preparation programme of the second year study composes of seven credit bearing units. The professional activity module titles the “Skill Proficiency 1” covers creative movements, badminton, swimming and handball, which are common core activities recommended by the Curriculum Development Council of Hong Kong for secondary school pupils (CDC, 1975, 1980, 1988). They contribute to the all-round development of the pupils because of their activity natures.

Creative movements, which include units of creative dances and educational gymnastics, enable pupils to develop aesthetics, expression and creativity through rhythmic movements. Handball is a popular sport in Hong Kong secondary schools. It is an “invasion” team game involving physical contact and cultivates courage, aggressiveness, team spirits and social values. Badminton is a popular recreational and lifetime sport as it contributes to the physical fitness regardless of age and sex. In the past twenty years, the outstanding performance of Chinese and Hong Kong badminton teams in the international sporting arena has helped to promote the sport in school. Swimming acquaints pupils of both sexes and all ages with aquatic competence and prepare them for other outdoor pursuits such as canoeing, sailing and windsurfing. Together with the physical activities learnt in the first year study, the module of the second year-study serve as the content knowledge for building up pre-service PE teachers’ repertoire in physical skill competence for teaching in secondary schools.

The theoretical module of “Motor Learning” is an area of study in PE highlighting the conditions facilitating the acquisition and improvement of motor skills. It serves as the follow-up study of the module “Teaching of PE” learned in the first semester. The module of “PE Administration in Secondary School” acquaints student PE teachers with the competencies required to manage PE programmes at the secondary school level. It familiarise their administrative work dimension of PE teachers including filing and

recording, purchase and maintenance of equipment, organising intra- and inter schools sports competition and safety precautions. “PE Evaluation in Secondary Schools” shares with pre-service PE teachers the conceptual and technical skills, the assessment and evaluation of school PE. The content of “Basic Anatomy and Physiology” draws on theoretical concepts from the disciplines of anatomy and physiology. Pre-service PE teachers are introduced to the knowledge of the basic structure of the body, the responses, adjustments and adaptations of the body to physical exercise, and the benefits on health, sports training and injury prevention. The theoretical modules serve as foundational knowledge to support PE teaching.

## **Appendix 22: A Sample of the Interview Guide for the Phase Four Data Collection**

The Institute of Education

University of London

Research Project: From Students to Physical Education Teachers: A Longitudinal Studies  
of the Pre-service Physical Education Teachers in Hong Kong

### **The Four Phase Study: The Professional Reorientation Phase**

To find out background information of the teaching practice.

To ask for happy and successful experience, unsuccessful experiences?

To recognise the differences between the two FEs?

To explore participants' feeling about the two FEs?

To go through self-evaluation of the participants by asking:?

- What do you get from the FE?

- What were the difficulties found during the FE?

- What were your strengths?

- What were your weaknesses?

- Did you receive any support from the School PE teacher? Give Comments.

- What are differences in expectation from the pupils through PE before and after FE?

- What do you learn from the FE?

To learn about participants' opinions on the courses including:

- PE teacher education programme

- Creative Movements

- Badminton

- Swimming

- Handball

- Motor learning

- PE Evaluation in Secondary Schools

- Basic Anatomy and Physiology

- PE Administration

To talk about confidence, strengths and weaknesses of a PE teacher with the participants.

LI Chung

Research Student

## **Appendix 23: A Sample of the Reflective Journal for the Phase Four Data Collection**

Institute of Education

University of London

Research Project: From Students to Physical Education Teachers: A Longitudinal Studies  
of the Pre-service Physical Education Teachers in Hong Kong

### **Reflective Journal (Phase 4)**

Describe the incident(s) that you had encountered with difficulties, frustration or unhappiness during the FE.....

How did you deal with it (them)? (Please describe the course of actions)

What were the results and consequences?

How did you feel?

Comments on the PE modules

Creative Movements

Badminton

Swimming

Handball

Motor learning

PE Evaluation in Secondary Schools

**Basic Anatomy and Physiology**

**PE Administration**

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

**LI Chung**

**Research Student**



**Appendix 24: Table showing the details of participants' teaching assignment in the second FE**

Cases (Participants with Orientations towards)	Class taught	Total no. of PE periods	Teaching content	Types of the TP Schools
Chung (Coaching)	Form 2,3	24	Basketball, Football, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary school, Band Five
To (Coaching)	Form 1,2 (Co-Ed. classes)	30	Athletics, Gymnastics, Physical Fitness	Subsidized Secondary school (Band Five)
Lai (Coaching)	Form 3 (Co-Ed. classes)	20	Rugby, Basketball, Table Tennis	Subsidized Secondary school
Tung (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 1,2	24	Handball, Gymnastics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary school
Hang (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 1	36	Football, Badminton, Handball, Physical Fitness	Subsidized Secondary school (Boys' School)
Hung (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 2	26	Gymnastics, Volleyball, Badminton	Subsidized Secondary school
Kwan (Pragmatic considerations)	Form 2 (Girls' classes)	30	Basketball, Badminton, Athletics, Handball, Creative movements	Subsidized Secondary school (Band One) (Same school of the first FE)
Sim (Teaching affinity)	Form 2	28	Dance, Volleyball, Gymnastics	Subsidized Secondary school, Band One
Fai (Teaching affinity)	Form 1, 2, 3	40	Basketball, Football, Badminton, Physical fitness, Gymnastics	Government Secondary school (Same school of the first FE)
Yan (Teaching affinity)	Form 2,3	20	Badminton, Gymnastics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary school (Band One) (Girls' School)
Siu (Teaching affinity)	Form 2	28	Badminton, Gymnastics, Swimming	Subsidized Secondary school
Lung (Teaching affinity)	Form 2,3	26	Gymnastics, Handball, Creative movements	Subsidized Secondary school, (Boys' School)
Leung (Teaching affinity)	Form 2,3	14	Football, Handball, Gymnastics, Physical Fitness	Subsidized Secondary School
Ho (An easy-going style)	Form 1,2 (Co-Ed. classes)	28	Athletics, Gymnastics, physical fitness	Subsidized Secondary school (Band five)
Kin (An easy-going style)	Form 1,2	22	Handball, Gymnastics, physical fitness	Subsidized Secondary school
Kai (An easy-going style)	Form 1,2	30	Gymnastics, Handball, Athletics, Basketball	Subsidized Secondary school
Shing (An easy-going style)	Form 3	18	Athletics, Badminton, Table Tennis	Subsidized secondary school
Chan (Apprehensiveness)	Form 2 (one boys' class) (one co-ed. class)	22	Football, Gymnastics, Volleyball, Badminton.	Subsidized Secondary school
Kuen (Apprehensiveness)	Form 1,3	24	Badminton, Gymnastics, Handball, Physical Fitness	Subsidized Secondary school (Band One)
Man (Apprehensiveness)	Form 1,3	20	Handball, Badminton, Gymnastics, Physical Fitness	Subsidized Secondary school (Band One)

Teaching content (no. of participants planned to teach): Gymnastics (16 ), Handball (10), Badminton (9), Physical Fitness (7), Basketball (6 ), Football (5 ), Athletics (5), Volleyball (3), Table Tennis (2), Creative movements (2), Rugby (1), Dance (1).

Types of the School (no. of participants being arranged to have their FE): Subsidised schools (18), Government schools (1), Private schools (1), Co-Ed. classes (3)